*Enduring Images Frozen in Time*

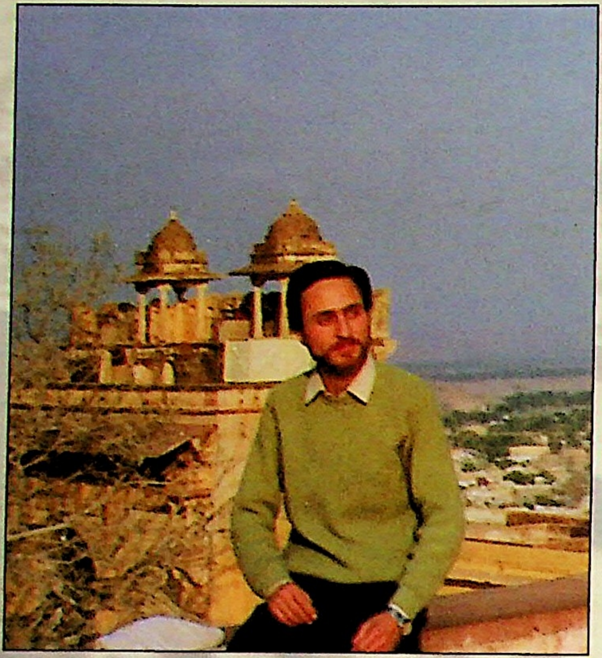
# A Photo-Portrait of Kashmiri Pandits



*Researched & Compiled by*

**S. N. Pandita**
**Ramesh Manvati**

with a Foreword by JAGMOHAN



*Ramesh Manvati at the Jaipūr Fort.*

A descendant of, Thakur Joo Manvati, one of the great saints of Kashmir in modern times, Ramesh Manvati is an accredited opinion maker on the future of Kashmiri Pandits. For the past more than a decade and half, as a member of Think-Tank Group of Kashmiri Pandits, Manvati is engaged in deliberating issues and solutions that confront the beleaguered Pandit community. Among other things, the focus of his work has also been to interpret culture and identity symbolism of the Kashmiri Pandits through studies in folk literature, cultural artifacts and social historiography. His seminal views have appeared in several national papers like The Hindustan Times, The Times of India, The Pioneer, The Indian Express and other journals and community publications of the Pandits. He has participated in many confereces and seminars in the country dealing with the issues of displaced Kashmiri Pandits. As a core member, he has also been involved in organising historical and prestigeous 1st & 2nd 'World Kashmiri Pandit Conferences' held in New Delhi in 1993 and 1998 respectively. His opinions and views have earned him public respect and acclaim. As a writer, Ramesh Manvati also edits the prestigious National Capital Region KP newsletter – *Paannyaar*. He is also member of several reputed organizations and literary groups of Kashmiri Pandits that are engaged in Institution Building Model strategy for the post-exodus rehabilitation of the displaced Pandits. Ramesh Manvati is also an accomplished photographer and a keen trekker. He has trekked to most of the important pilgrim centres of Kashmir which also include *Gangabal, Amarnath Cave, Vishnupad (Kongwatan), Naraan Naag and Harishwar.*

*Photograph by: Mrs Reeta Manvati*





*Enduring Images Frozen in Time*

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First Edition :2007.

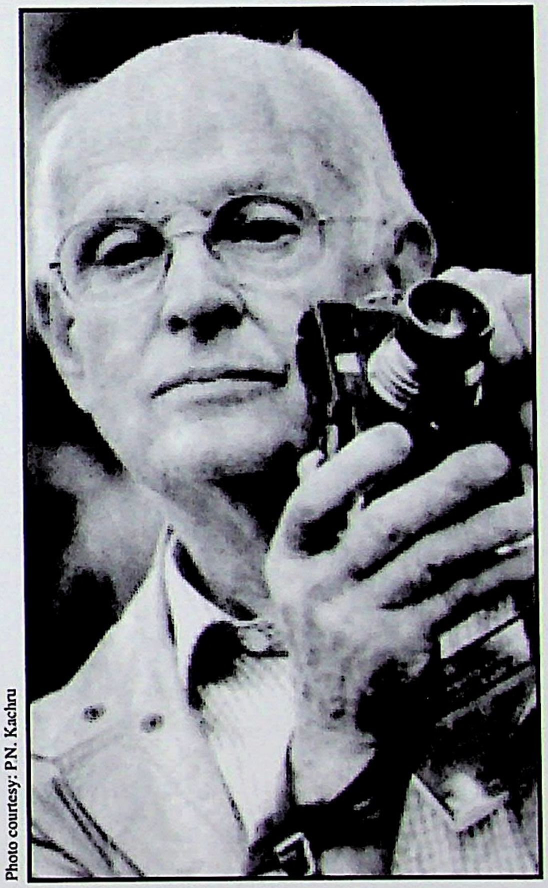


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*"Unfortunately, memory can not be photographed."*




**Henri Cartier-Bresson**
( Eye of the 20th century.)

# *Dedication*



This book of photographs is dedicated to the youth of Kashmiri Pandit community, beckoning them to preserve the past attributes of their cultural identity and take pride in claiming its rich legacy.

# CONTENTS

# FOREWORD

Broadly speaking, culture is a heritage preserved day to day by a section of people that reveals their particular way of living based on traditions, beliefs, customs and language. Its evolution is governed by intellectual influence that helps to hold tight the roots through which rises the sap that sustains it.

Kashmir, the cradle of Asian civilisation, has the unique position of retaining ancient culture in its pristine glory. This is largely a result of the efforts of its saints, sages and thinkers but assuredly due to the natural gift of its location guarded by the mighty ranges of the Himalayas. To this very land belong the Kashmiri Pandits who rank among the most talented and highly distinguished communities of India. Known throughout history for their contributions to literature, religion and art of India, they have left an indelible mark on the canvas of Indian ethos. While there is no denying the fact that their history is infinitely ancient, there are claims that even their "traditions run back to Gods and the divine origin of things".

And yet this gifted and peace loving community has been hounded and massacred from time to time in their very home-land down the long course of Kashmir's tumultuous history, the last being their exodus in 1989 as a result of cross-border terrorism and communal frenzy unleashed by Pakistan and its supporters. Consequently, their culture has been harmed and much of their heritage is devastated. However, it must be admired that, despite monumental tragedy, they are facing their condition stoically, and doing everything possible to preserve what all is left of their culture.

They are now living in different social, cultural and geographical environs which are nowhere similar to what they lived through in their native land in peaceful times. Therefore, it goes to their indefatigable perseverance that they continue to contribute to the intellectual destiny of India as before. Man has now occupied practically the whole earth as his habitat and yet he has not completed evolution of a world-culture. This process is, however, there and one can see world-culture in its birth-pangs. In appreciating and praising the Kashmiri Pandit Culture, there is no denying its great worth. History of the influence of Kashmiri Pandit Culture is part of the history of humanity and in the basic oneness of the human culture its strand shines bright and brilliant.

It is said and seen that cultures rise and fall and yet this is not due to any physical change in the members of a community but a change in mental outlook. The process of deviation is so gradual and individual that the generality remains unconscious in spite of the great change that besets in the course of generations. The example of Kashmiri Pandits is a classical pointer in this regard.

It is in this spirit that I am approaching the subject of this photo-album. Photographs presented herein are an interesting record of Kashmiri Pandits in the past. Many facets of their old habitat, dress, cultural traditions and religious practices are preserved in these pictures. They indeed are a reminder to the present generation of the Kashmiri Pandits to understand the extent of change their community has undergone in their social and cultural characteristics. They are also of immense importance to introduce young Kashmiri Pandits to the rich past of their community life as they have missed its experience due to the changed circumstances of their living in present times. The photographs of this volume, I believe, will help them visualise the past of the community in its "unspoiled tradition" as the compilers have claimed.

As one leafs through this beautiful album, which is the first of its kind, the journey one makes acquaints him or her with rich culture and interesting religious traditions of the Kashmiri Pandits.

Perhaps no one, who knows the community life of the Kashmiri Pandits, can be in any doubt as to what these photographs preserve. Having myself lived and remained in close contact with Kashmir, it is not difficult for me to appreciate that some of the photographs of this volume capture rare sights and occasions of social and historical importance as far the Kashmiri Pandits are concerned. Hence, their archival value and importance must be judged in these contexts while they can also be invaluable to the social scientists and anthropologists.

The album is the outcome of an intention of the compilers to bring in one place, as far as it has been possible for them, old photographs of the Kashmiri Pandits that have survived neglect and loss and had till now been found only in scattered sources. Therefore, it is not difficult to appreciate the pains with which S. N. Pandita and Ramesh Manvati, the two young Kashmiri Pandits endowed with unusual zeal and enthusiasm to preserve their community's culture and heritage, have laboured to hunt the photographs that are now embodied in this album. They have laboured hard to extensively research the sources of these photographs and made every effort to prepare the best possible print of each image for use in this album.

For their sincere hard work, both Pandita and Manvati deserve praise and admiration particularly as the work undertaken by them has been in such times and circumstances when almost everything that their community possessed, prior to 1990, both in the tangible and intangible forms, has been scattered. Yet it is the outcome of their dedication to the cause of Kashmir's cultural heritage that a photo-portrait like this one has become possible.

Brief remarks appended to the photographs are informative and uplifting. These, however, are laced with Kashmiri terms which would have remained unintelligible, to those who do not know the Kashmiri language, but for the glossary of these terms annexed at the end of this volume. It has obviated the difficulty for the non-Kashmiri readers who, I hope, will appreciate the concern of the compilers in this regard. To say the least, this album is a vivid visual feast that provides distinct glimpses into various facets of Kashmiri Pandit life. It is also my hope that this album will be a source of inspiration to the younger generation of the Kashmiri Pandits as has been spelled in the dedicatory note by the compilers.

Given the circumstances that Kashmiri Pandits are in, at present, their struggle for survival and rehabilitation is not yet over. They have miles to go before they can hope to return to the 'Garden of Sages' where the basic principles of faith, mutual love, freedom and brotherhood will always remain the legacy of mankind.

**January 4, 2007**
**New Delhi.**

**JAGMOHAN**

# PREFACE

Sometimes it becomes all too apparent how powerless words are when compared to a photographic image and how aptly it is said that, "a picture is more than a million words." This book is a diligently researched collection of photographs showcasing Kashmiri Pandits in the past and may, perhaps, take a Kashmiri Pandit on a journey down the memory lane.

The purpose of this book is three fold: one, to serve as a visual guide to introduce young Kashmiri Pandits to the past face of the community that they no longer experience and live through as a result of circumstances imposed on them due to 'internal displacement' and exile from their place of origin, Kashmir, two, that these photographs are seen by a larger number of people particularly within the community, to appreciate a distinct cultural face of a people whose contribution to the civilization of India is immense and out of proportion to their demographic number, and, three, to preserve some part of the surviving photo heritage of the Kashmiri Pandits for posterity which has till now been found only in scattered sources.

The photographs presented here reveal the peaceful face of the Kashmiri Pandits with unspoiled tradition. They are intended to give a visual experience which, however, may be accompanied by nostalgia. For the eye of a Kashmiri Pandit, they carry something compelling in them. The photographs not only illustrate historical record of the socio-cultural face of the community and show many of the various facets of their traditional life but they also capture the vast ocean of the spirit that pervaded their lives in the past. They show the face and identity of the community much different than its present-day generation shows and carries. Hence, the photographs presented in this slender book are in a way a reminder to the present-day living generation of the Kashmiri Pandits, as to how far they have drifted and changed in their social and cultural attributes. They also raise various other questions as to the need of preserving old attributes and the desirability of change adopted willingly or forced by circumstances.

While there is no denying the fact that the photographic record of a community constitutes one of the most authentic records of the history of its people particularly when it preserves the attributes of their past culture and traditions, yet, unfortunately, such records for the Kashmiri Pandits are far and few. Many 20th century photographs, showing native Pandits in Kashmir are believed to have gone into the collection of some western collectors. Photographs of these collections are scattered in the west at places like Vienna, Budapest, Prague, Boston, Yale, Oxford and London. By and large these photographs in the western collections have remained away from public eye. So far only a very small number of these photographs have been catalogued and surveyed in a scientific manner.

It is also well known that there are no public photographic collections in India which preserve Kashmiri Pandit traditions and their culture. Hence, for most of their existence, photographs featuring Kashmiri Pandits in Kashmir, have remained preserved in the collections of private sources and in the individual family photo-albums of the community. While a large number of such photographs, important from historical and socio- cultural perspectives have been consumed by the neglect of their owners and havoc of time, a vast treasure of this community wealth also stands lost and destroyed due to and during the ongoing militancy in Kashmir that erupted there way back in 1986. Thus, only a small number of photographs that feature traditional Kashmiri Pandit cultural heritage and history have survived. And of these, only some have become accessible to us.

Set across a period of over one century, the photographs presented here are unaltered and authentic images of Kashmiri Pandits showing their traditional face in the past. The nucleus of the collection has been drawn form photographs obtained from private sources and individuals. However, some photographs have been reproduced from various published sources as well. This has been done with the sole objective to bring out in a single document photo references to Kashmiri Pandits in the yore—an image virtually lost and even fast receding from the memory of its living generation—to the extent it has become possible for us. Both these sources are identified separately under *'Credits for Photographs'*. To both these sources we record our sincere gratitude. But for these sources, this volume would not have been possible.

However, the individuals and other sources identified in the list are not the only ones we contacted and utilized to build our collection. Nearly about 500 individuals and Kashmiri Pandit families, whom we believed and were given to understand to possess such photographs were contacted by us, both directly and indirectly. Our journey to collect these photographs for the compilation of this portfolio began more than a decade back. The arduous journey, though not so long, was full of varied experiences. Some responses were warm and spontaneous indicating support and encouragement to our pursuit. In some of the cases we drew a blank. And some owners were simply reluctant to give their precious relics even when guaranteed with the promise that they would be returned safely and without any damage caused to their objects. Even when such photographs have become unavailable to us, they have in no way made this portrait less representative of the theme and focus it is trying to capture since similar other photographs have been included instead.

It was our endeavour to obtain dates,( *year to which the photographs pertain*) from the owners and had thus intended to indicate the same with the photographs. Though some dates were confirmed, yet in most of the cases the information was vague. Hence, in order to avoid wrong dating and to maintain uniformity in the portfolio, no dates for photographs are indicated. The identity of many persons appearing in these photographs that became known to us during the course of our compilation and also of those known to us as well has been withheld to maintain their right to privacy.

Most of the photographs are older than 50 years, some as old as about a century and a few are even more than 100 years old. None dates post forced exodus of the community from Kashmir. However, they are neither exclusive nor exhaustive but only representative. They are aimed to help the Kashmiri Pandits to relive the memories of their cultural past and thus help them to visualize their past in the context of their present. It may be observed that the photographic quality of some of the photographs appearing in this volume is not good, but they preserve features of old attributes of much significance. Hence, their merit and importance must be seen in the light of what they preserve. The photographs have been captioned with brief remarks suggesting their import. The words appended to them have essentially been put for the benefit of non- Kashmiri Pandit readers in order to introduce them to these photographs as to what they mean and convey. For the elderly Kashmiri Pandit readers of this volume they may appear superfluous since we believe that such members of the community carry these images in the very make up of their nostalgia which they feel about their rich past.

This book is the result of ongoing research and as such is always open to new findings. For the student and lover of Kashmir any additional material relating to the past of Kashmir is invaluable. It is our earnest hope that further research on the subject will bring to light more photographs with still more greater details and diversity. It is possible that in future additional photographs of other themes and content which show the past of Kashmiri Pandits may be discovered tucked away amidst some one's personal treasures.

In the mean time, this compilation of photographs is a humble effort of two individuals to reinterpret our socio- cultural legacy now on the edge. It is just a curtain raiser, only an initial step of the community which we hope will follow with undertakings of more comprehensive nature in future to preserve our rich cultural wealth for the posterity.

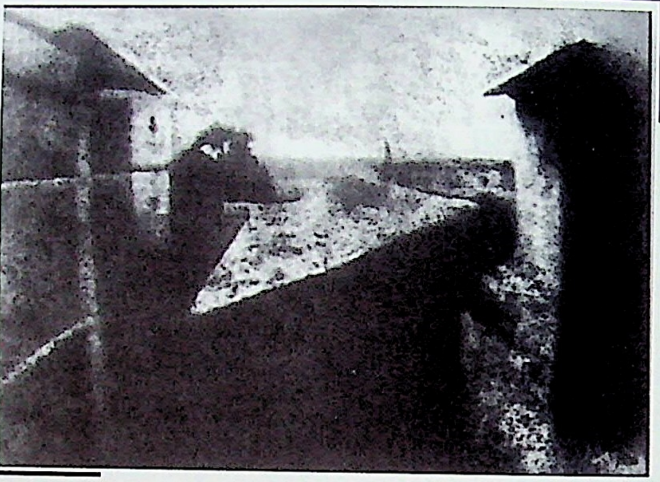
For the present, accompanying these 279 sepia and black and white prints we enter a world, whose future we already know (*it is sealed* ) but is unknown to its subjects. Riveting pictures crystallize the past and give it meaning outside the cliché. In many cases what is preserved in these photographs no longer exists now . It only survives in this ark.

May all those who study this slender photo-book be inspired to preserve the past of Kashmir in all forms and aspects possible.

**New Delhi,**
**December 10, 2006.**

**S. N. Pandita**
**Ramesh Manvati.**

# A WORD ABOUT EARLY PHOTOGRAPHY AND ITS ARRIVAL IN KASHMIR



7*

*World's oldest surviving photograph: Photograph of a barnyard taken by Joseph Nicephore Niepce* (1826A.D.)

The phenomena of photography as a scientific achievement dates to 1800 A. D. when Humphrey Davy and Thomas Wedgewood created a photographic image. However, they failed to fix it and make it permanent. It was only in 1826 that Joseph Nicephore Niepce succeeded in creating what is now the oldest surviving photograph. This photograph was fixed on a pewter plate.

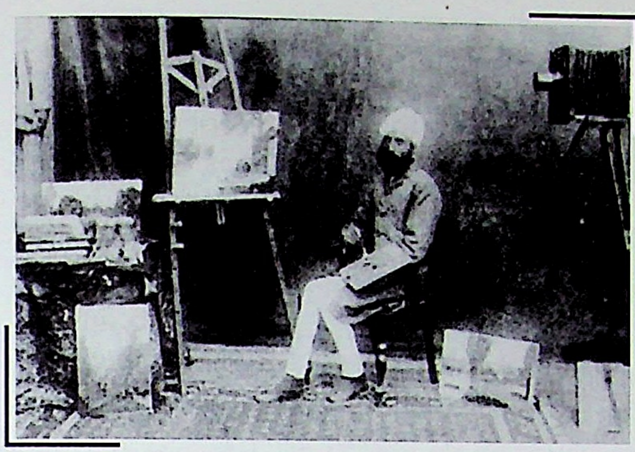
It followed with the development of the daguerreotype in 1839 by Louis Daguerre. Photography finally became a practical and convenient art with the invention of pin-hole Box-Brownie camera created by Kodak in 1888. And only some time later in the same year, George Eastman of Rochester, New York, came out with the first roll-film box camera. During this time in Kashmir, it seems more likely that Westerners rather than some Kashmiris would have had such a luxury item like a camera.

The early photographic record of Kashmir survives in Hardy Henry Cole's work on the ancient monuments of Kashmir which he undertook in 1868. During his stay in Kashmir, Cole used chemical



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*Kashmiri Pandits squatted on a **Waguv** beside their merchandise on the ground* (1875A.D.)



3* *Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi in his studio* . (1893A.D.)



12* *Swami Vivekananda with a group of Kashmiri Pandits* (1897A.D.)

plates sensitive to light to obtain photographs- a feat for which he took help and assistance of Burke, a professional photographer of Murree, a city now in Pakistan. The photographs however were processed and developed in England and finally appeared in 1869. Six years later in 1875, Fredric Drew too published his book *The Jummoo & Kashmir Territories* in which a photograph of a Kashmiri Pandit appeared.

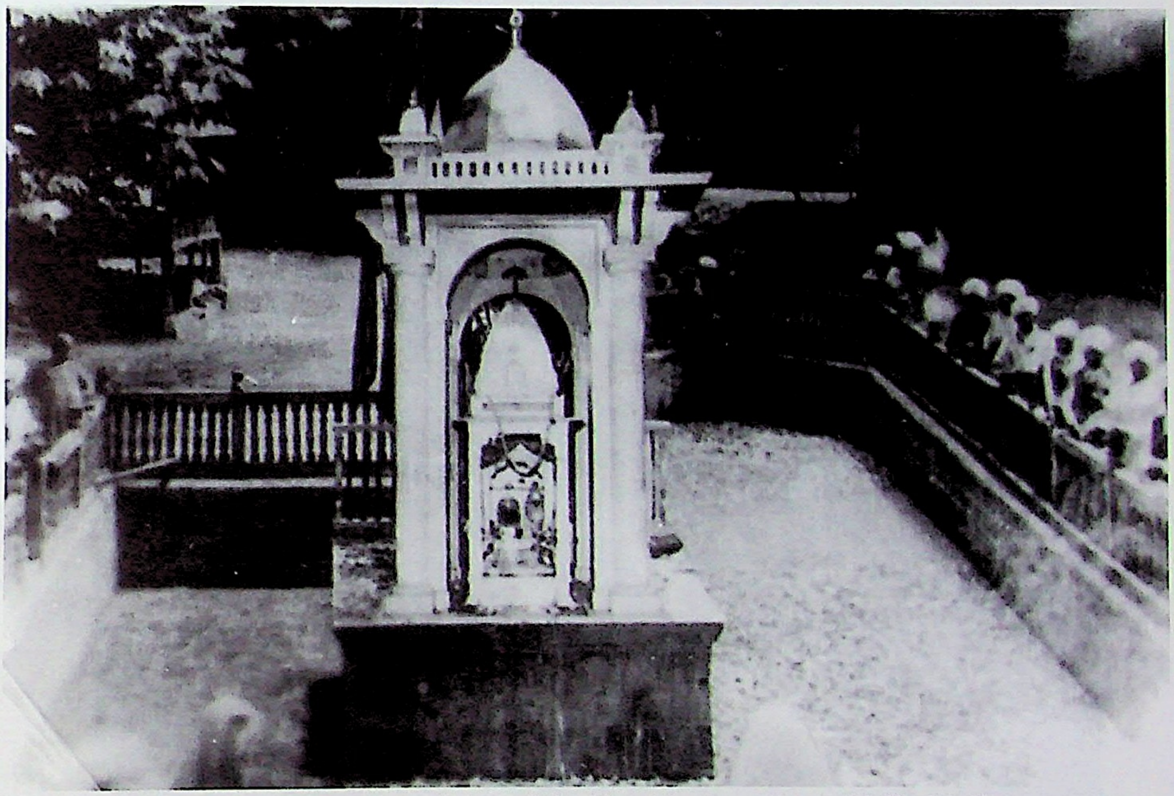
However, it was not long after the invention of Box–Camera in 1888 when photography arrived in Kashmir few years later towards the close of 19$^{th}$ century due to the pioneering efforts of Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi. It is generally believed that the oldest photograph taken by native hands and developed in Srinagar,Kashmir, showing a Kashmiri Pandit is the one which features Swami Vivekananda along with some native Pandits during former's visit to Kashmir in 1897 A.D. This photograph is believed to have been taken by Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi.

Very recently, a photograph featuring Late Vishi Nath Kampassi, the father of photography in Kashmir, himself, has come to light. It is claimed to be of 1893 A.D.

No other photograph, attributed to native skills, showing a Kashmiri Pandit in Kashmir, has surfaced so far that predates Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi's photograph. However, it is highly plausible to assume that from the time photography first arrived in Kashmir till the time Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi appears in a photograph, there is likely a chance that some photograph of a Kashmiri Pandit could have been taken and pre-dates, to that of Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi's photograph. Until such time a photograph older than that of Pandit Vishi Nath Kampassi surfaces, his remains the oldest surviving photograph created by native skills in Kashmir.

# A NOTE ON EARLY PHOTOGRAPHS OF KASHMIR

While studying old photographs of Kashmir it may be borne in mind that it was not easy to take pictures, in an era when some of the ones appearing in this book were actually taken, as it is today. Photography, whether professional or non-professional, was uncommon in early days as it was expensive, particularly in Kashmir. The actual taking of early photographs must also have been a tedious and lengthy process. Of course, with the arrival of old fashioned Kodak Brownie, the art of photography in Kashmir must have taken a new turn. Freed from the need of cumbersome technical equipment and gain in knowledge, non-professionals then must have enjoyed taking their own pictures. Hence, it seems reasonable to assume that in most cases, old photographs showing Kashmiri Pandits were taken by non-professional individuals.



*Praying at the spring shrine of Goddess Raginya Devi. (**Tulla Mulla**)*



*In reverence, at the alter of Goddess Raginya Devi. (**Tulla Mulla**)*



With the great Sage of India.

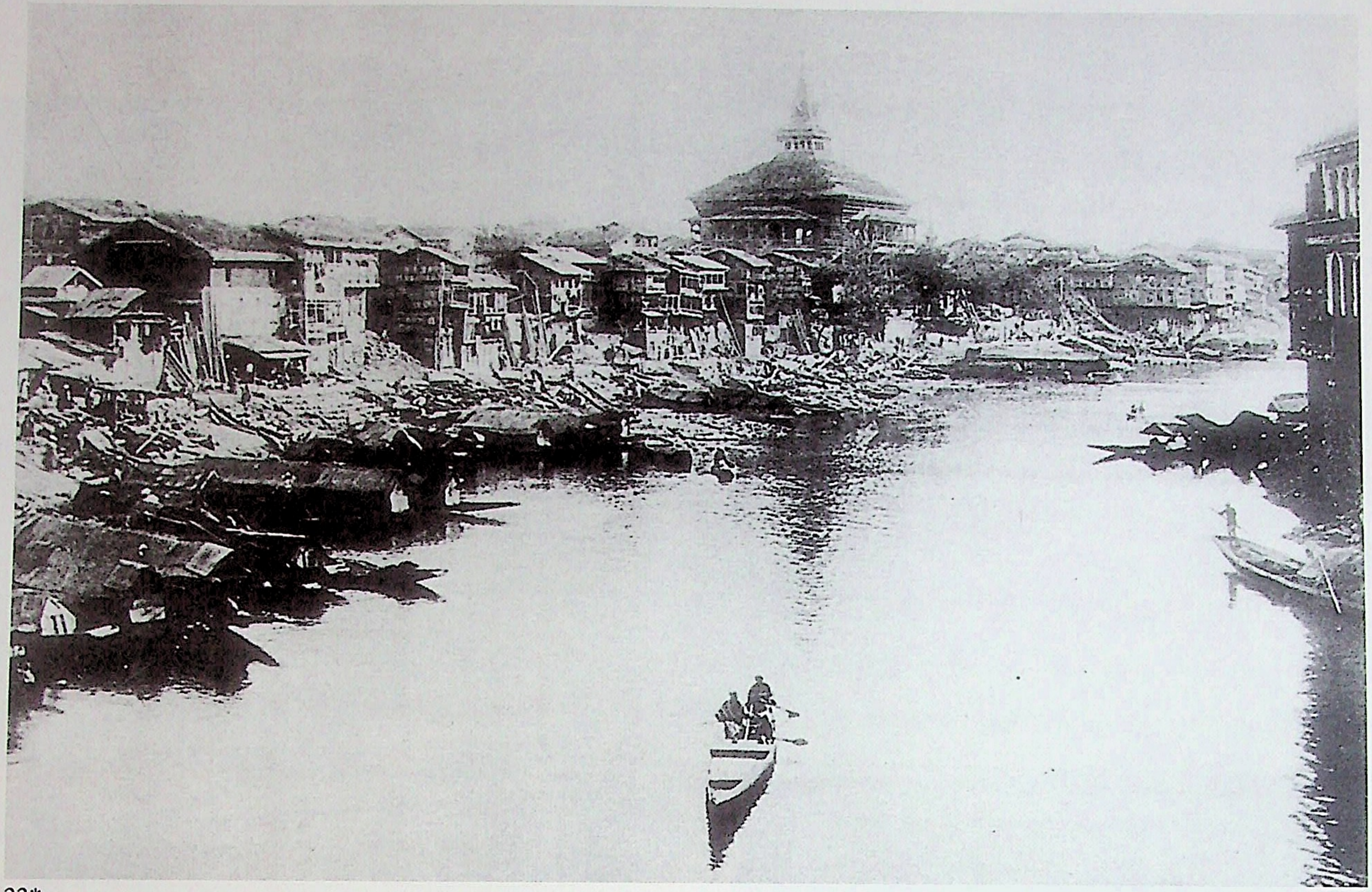
12*



38* *A line of typical houses on the **Maer** Canal at the beginning of the last century.*



*Imposing front of a big house with many attics and balconies fitted with* ***Wurusi*.**

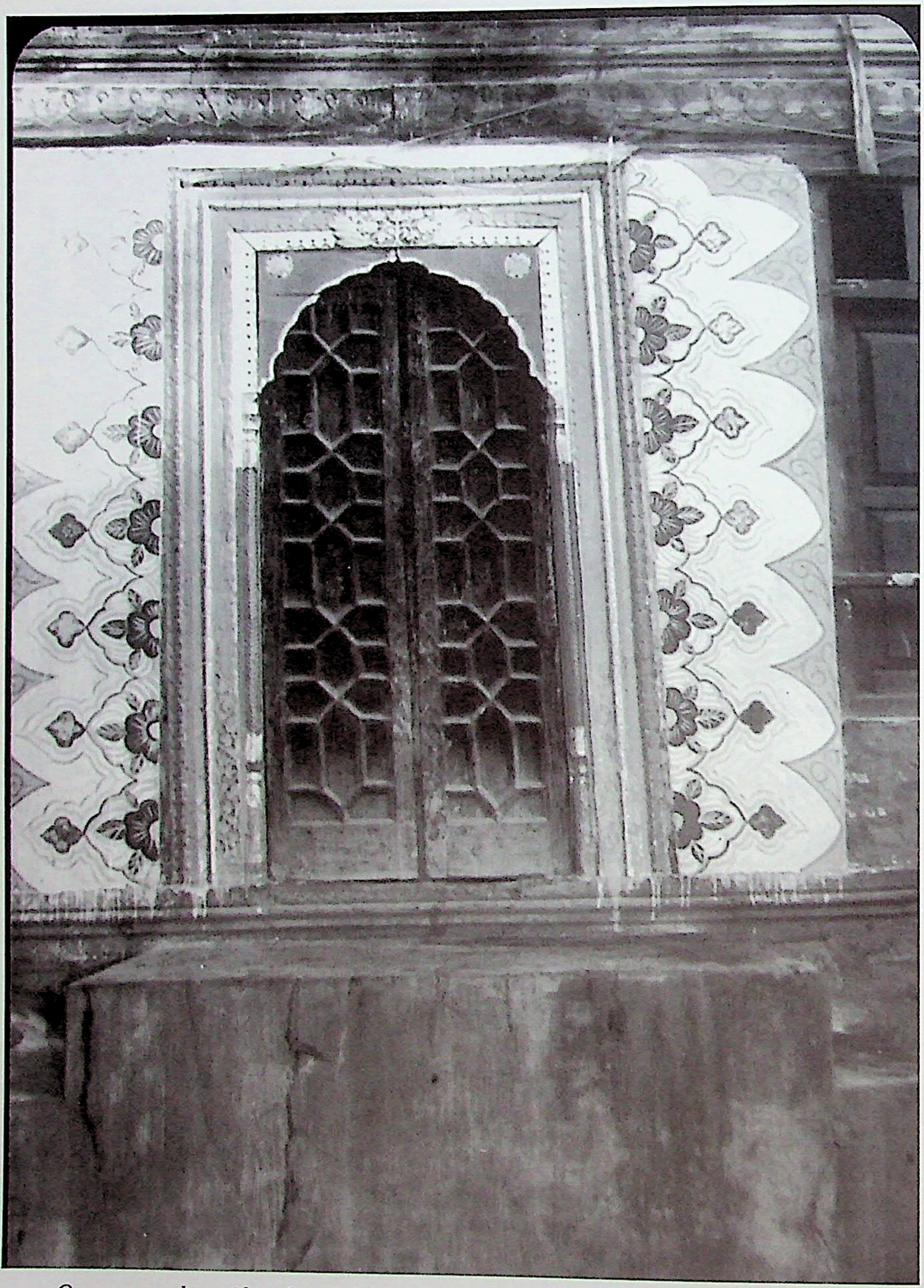


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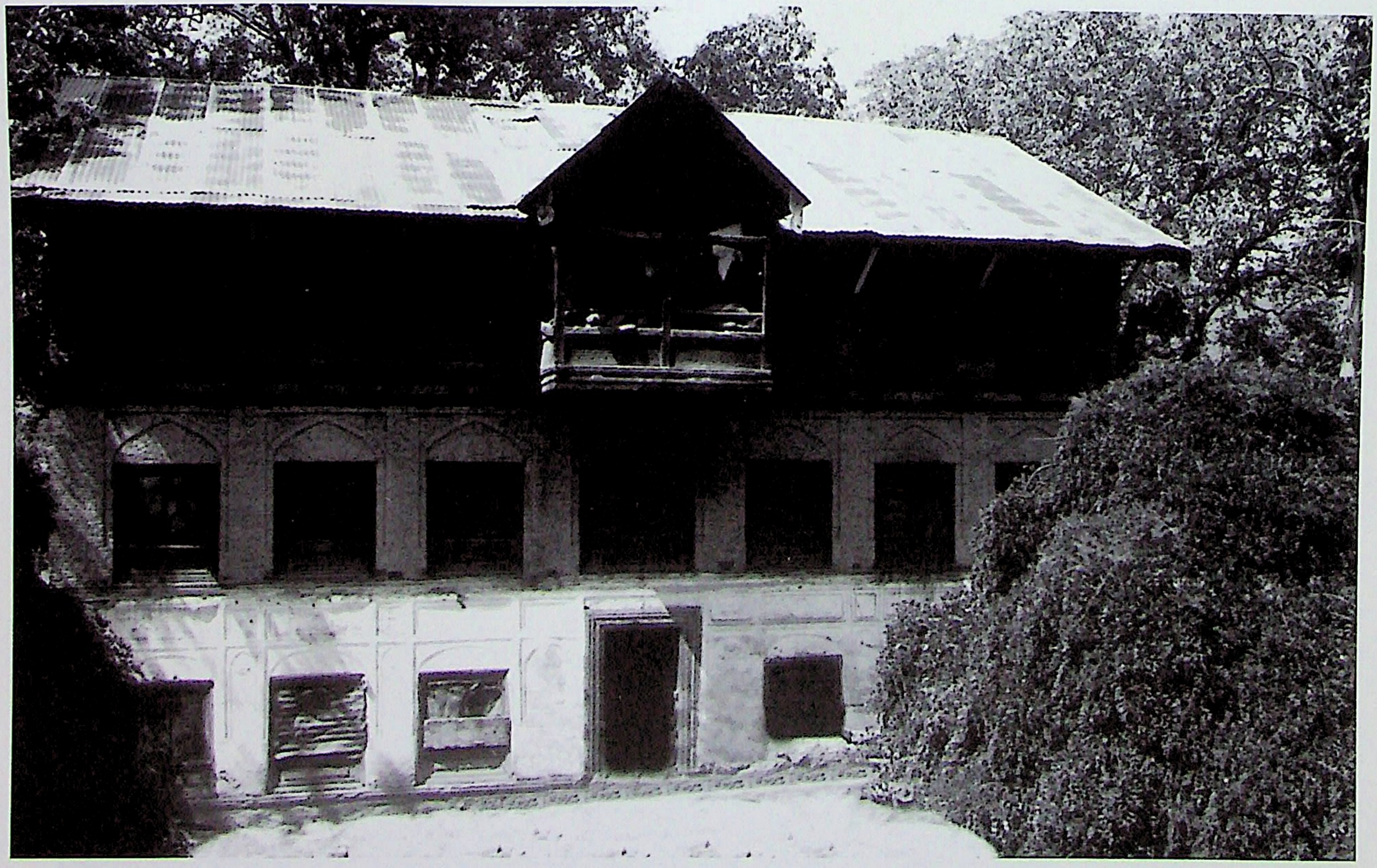
*Living quarters of the Pandits alongside the* ***Vitasta*** *bank.*



29* *A row of dwelling houses on the bank of river* ***Vitasta****. A neighbourhood temple overlooking the skyline.*



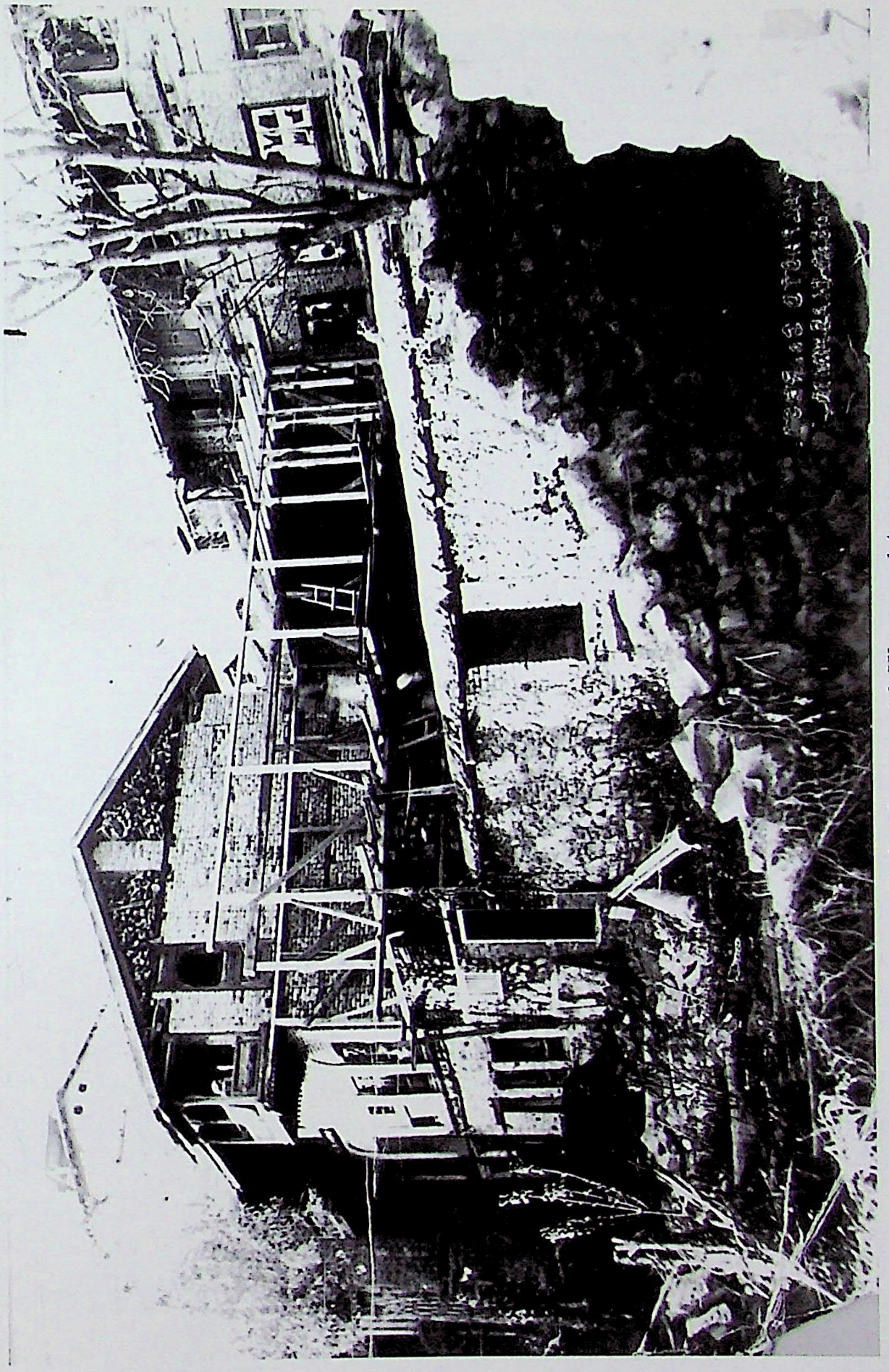
*Ornamented motif at the main door on the **Braandh** of a typical house.*



*A typical house showing a **Dub**, **Wuz Darwaz**, **Kani**, **Kuth** and **Wout**.*



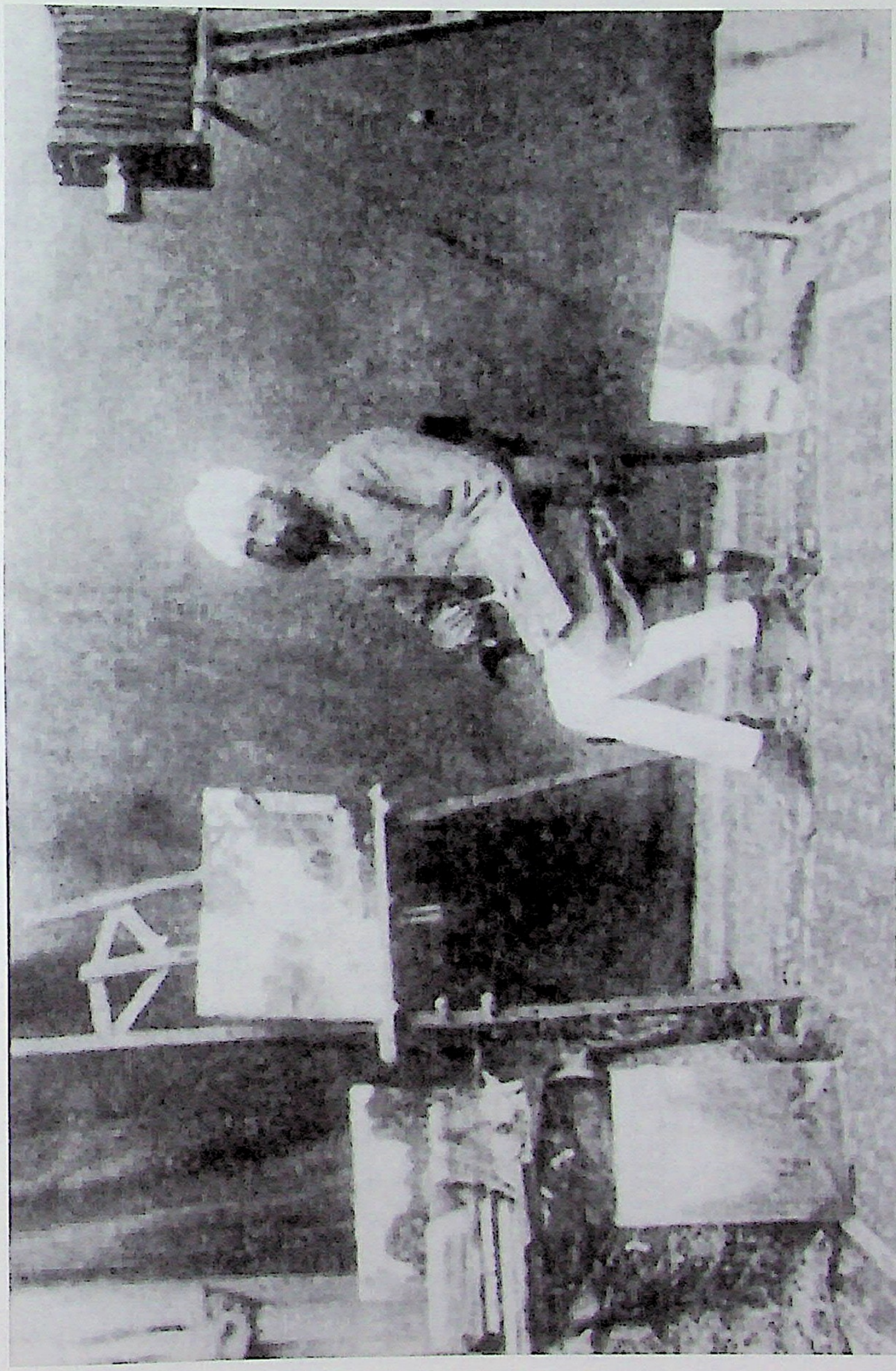
*Standing in the attic of his house with a set of clothing in hands.*



*Modest houses with* **Waers** *and* **Aanguns.**



*Young boys leaning on a* ***Dub****.*



*Facing a primitive camera.*

3*



*An old couple squatted with their backs supported by a* ***Takia.***



*An old woman in a typical dress wearing a* ***Pheran*** *over a shirt. Sitting on a* ***Braandh Pow****.*



49*

*Living simple. Comfortable and content with life.*



*A rich man of his time.*



*Proud grandparents with their new family member.*



*An elderly couple in typical attires. Man in **Kantop** on his head and **Thaez Khraw** in the feet. A typical **Looeng** tied to woman's waist.*



*Dressed impressively. Sitting in a meditative posture.*



9* *A venerated soul holding a book of scripture in his hands.*



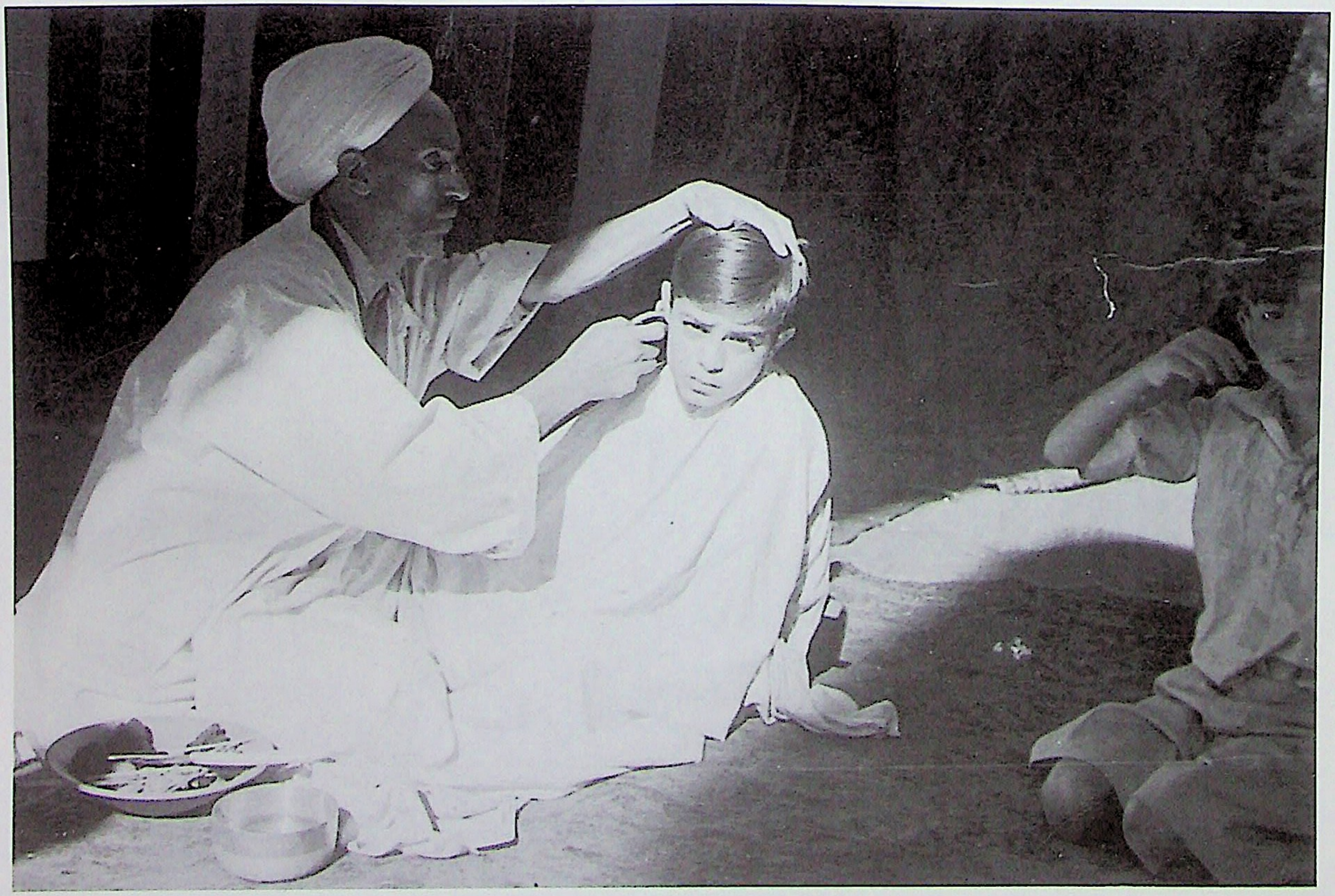
*A child with her grandfather.*



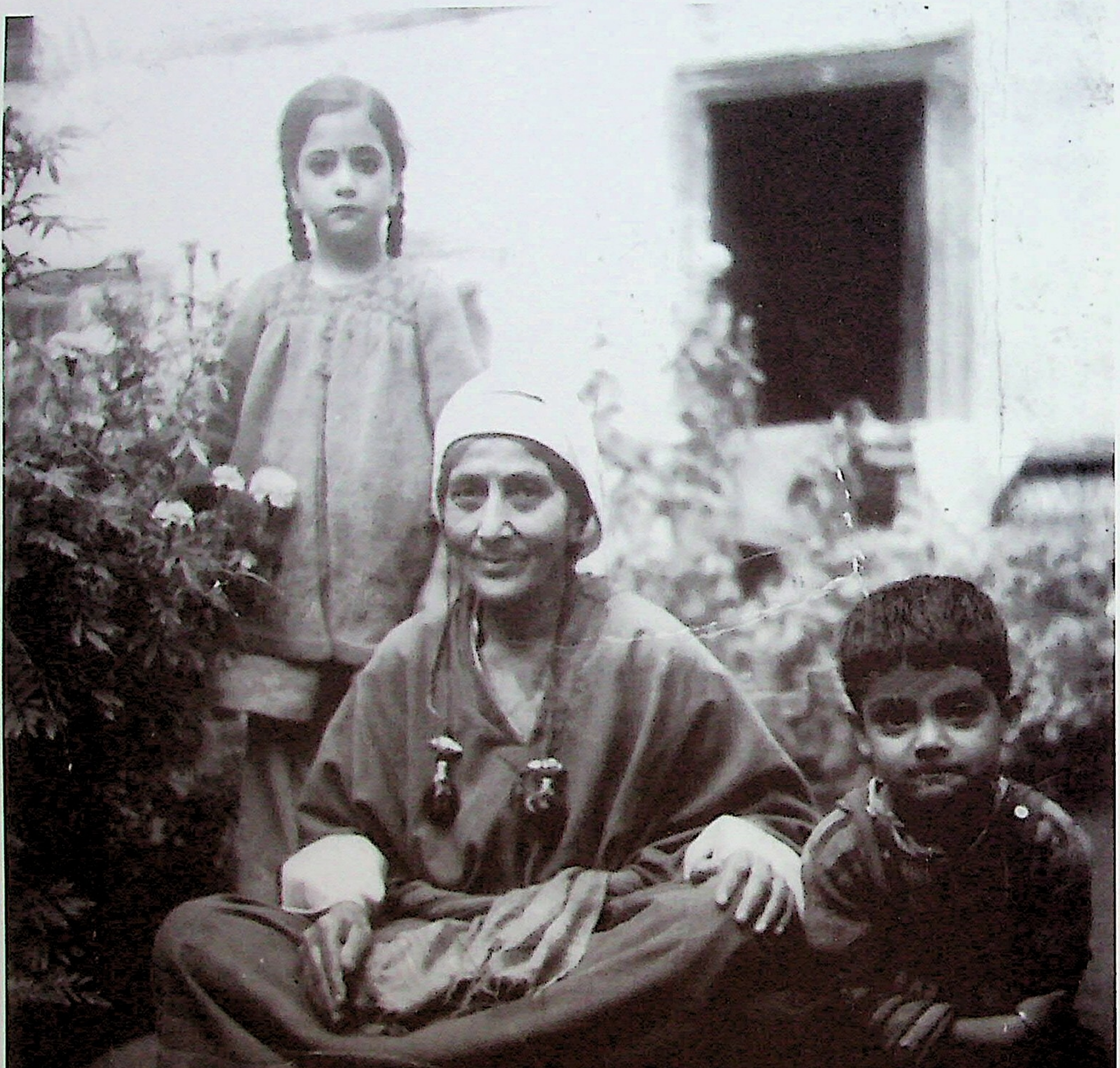
*A mother fondling her child on the* ***Braandh*****.** ***Wuz Darwaz*** *and* ***Panjaer Daer*** *of* ***Wout*** *can be seen.*



*Man dressed in more recent trendy wear. Woman in traditional outfit. Other women of the household cosying against the* ***Braandh Kathkar****.*



A **Navidd** giving a hair cut to a **Mekhla Maharaza**.



*A proud great-grandmother.*



*Attired in a typical outfit from head to toe.*



*A proud grandfather with his grandchildren engrossed in prayers with folded hands.*



***Hush** and **Nosh** inside a temple precinct.*



*A young girl with her grandmother*



*An infant in his mother's lap.*



*A child in the protective arms of her great-grandmother.*



*No detail of dress and ornamentation is wanting to indicate a perfect poise of a blissful life.*



*With folded hands, absorbed in deep thoughts.*



*A mother with her son.*



*Young men in modern outfits. Women still clad in traditional attire.*



*Looking graceful and dignified with* ***Mattarmaal, Kanwaej*** *and* ***Atth****.*



*Flanked by her son and daughter-in-law, a woman in a meditative pose.*



9*
*A devoted and admiring couple at the feet of a saintly man.*



*A group of cultural artists after a performance.*



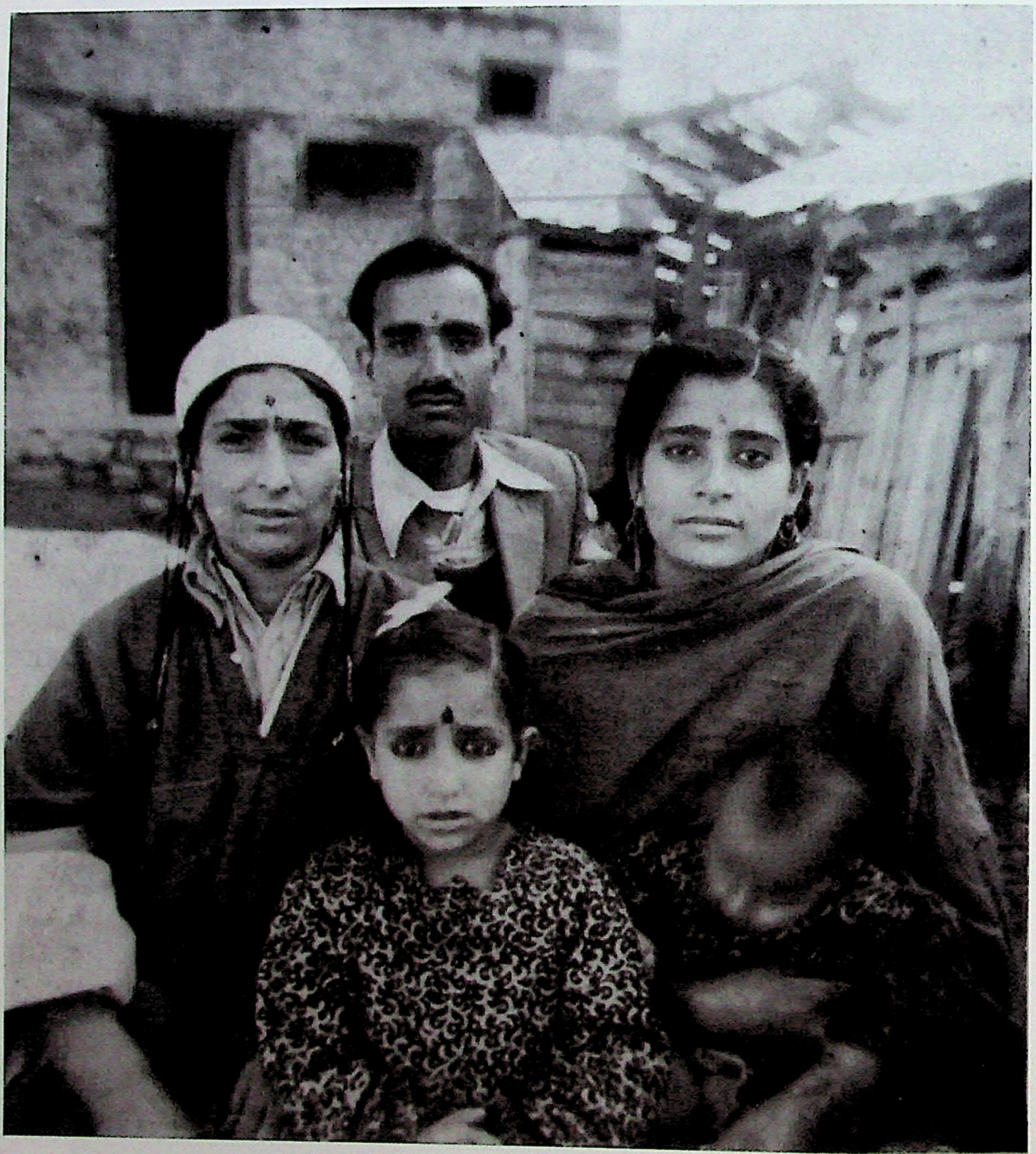
*A **Yazmanbhaai** attending to her guests on a marriage feast. Man serving the seated guests with delicacies.*



*In a typical attire, wearing traditional ornaments.* ***Mattarmaal*** *with* ***Raech*** *and* ***Dejhor*** *is distinctly visible.*



*Inside a temple precinct, a man holding a book of scripture.*



*A mother with her son and his family.*



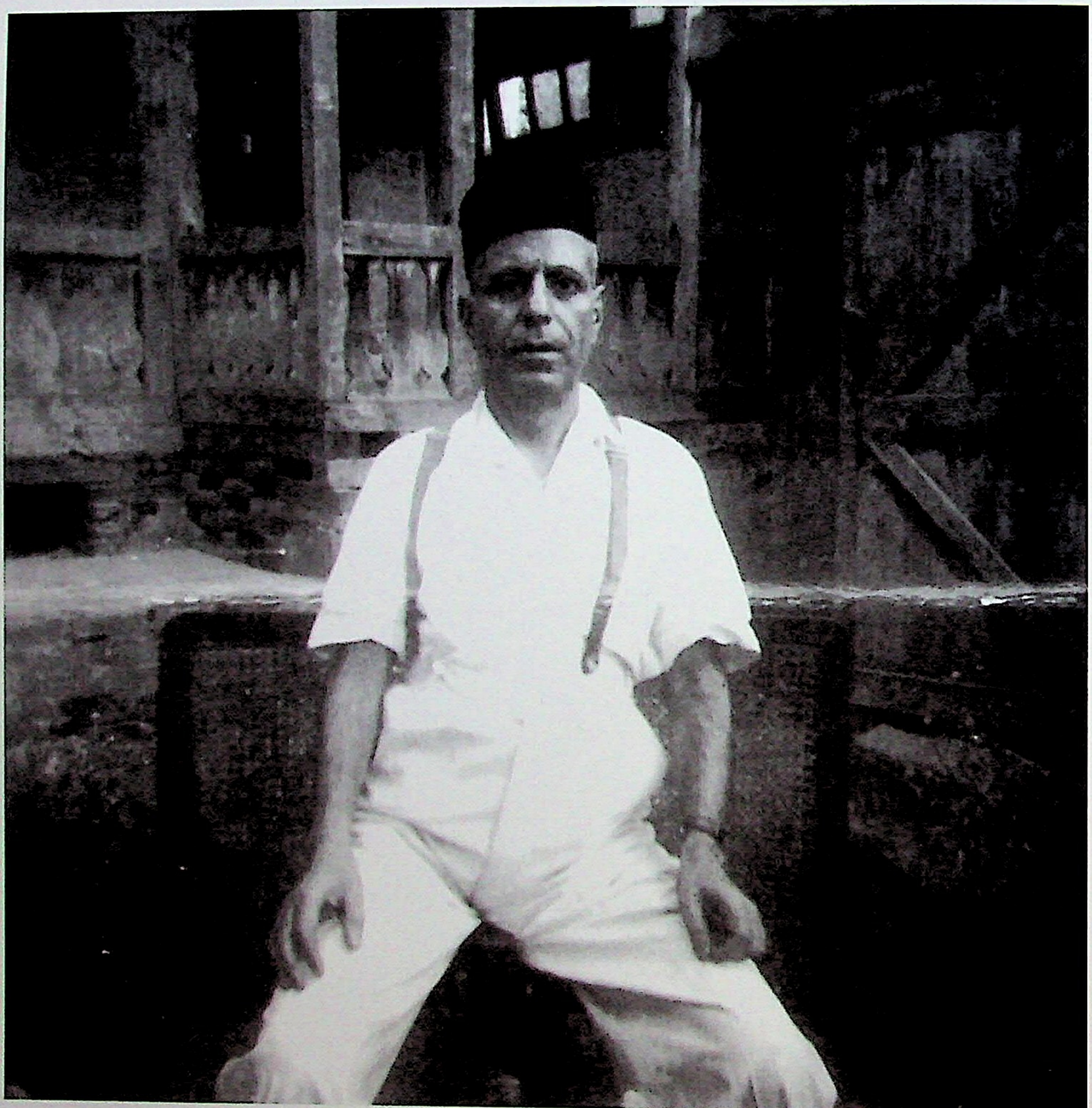
19* *A couple with their child in traditional dresses. Man wearing a modern pick cap.*



*Unmindful grandchildren with their grandmother seeking divine blessings.*



A *Mekhla Maharaza* receiving *Maess Bekhya*.



*A man in a trendy dress.*



*Moments of togetherness, a mother with her son.*



*A couple with their grandson.*



*Three sisters with their new-borns.*



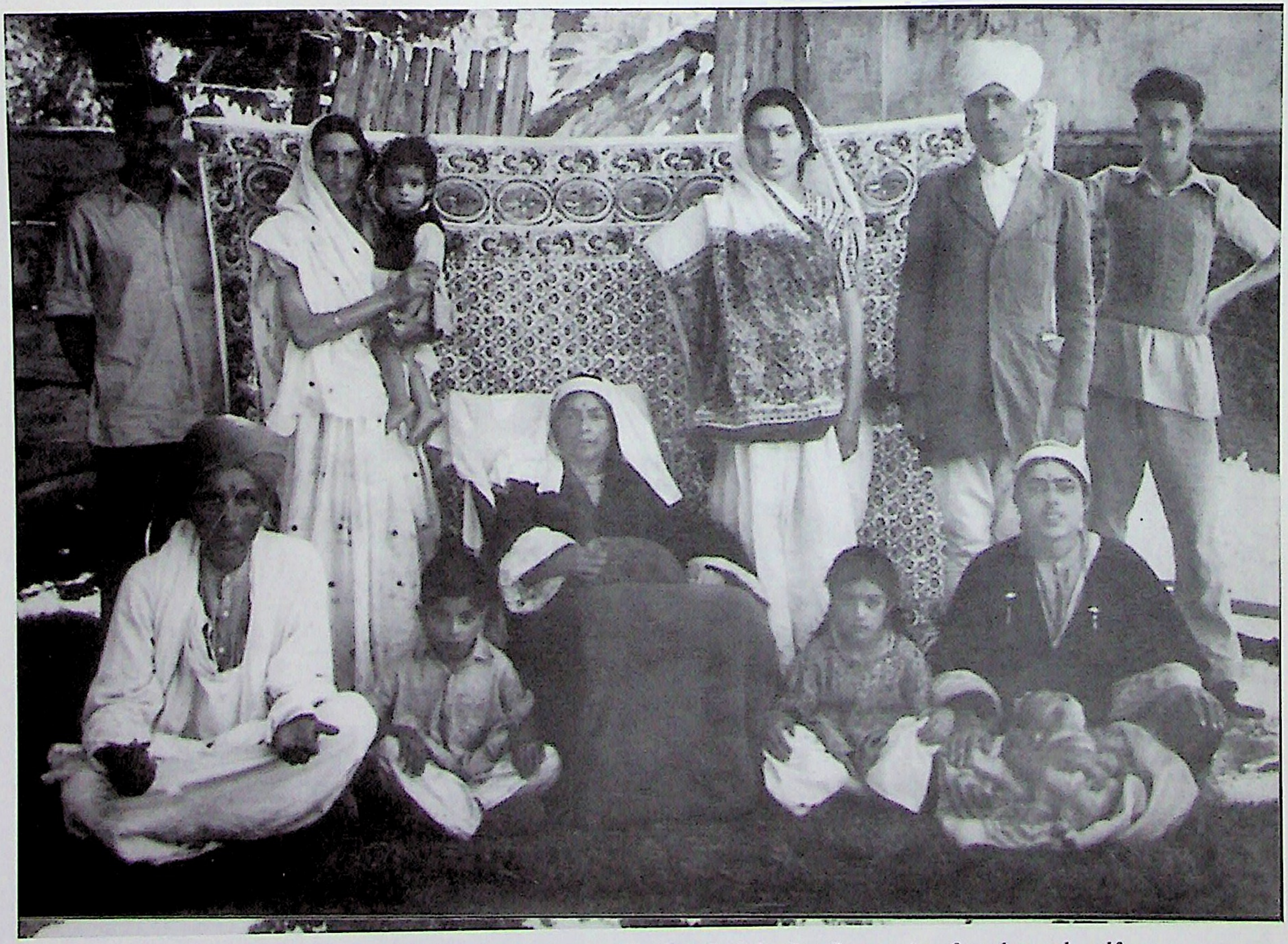
*Three sisters with children.*



*Two women attired in their best costumes on an outing. (Dress showing **Narivaar**, **Kalpush**, **Zooj**, **Pooch** and **Daej**)*



*Women with young children.*



*Daughters with their children and parents. The head of the family praying for alround welfare.*



19*

*Fellow brethern of a neighbourhood.*



*A woman wearing **Tarangh** and **Pheran** at an outing.*



*Girl students with their teachers and other staff members of a popular neighbourhood school.*



*A woman peeping out of a* ***Wout Daer****. Other members of the family are also seen.*



*A family at the gate of holy spring shrine*—***Tulla Mulla.***



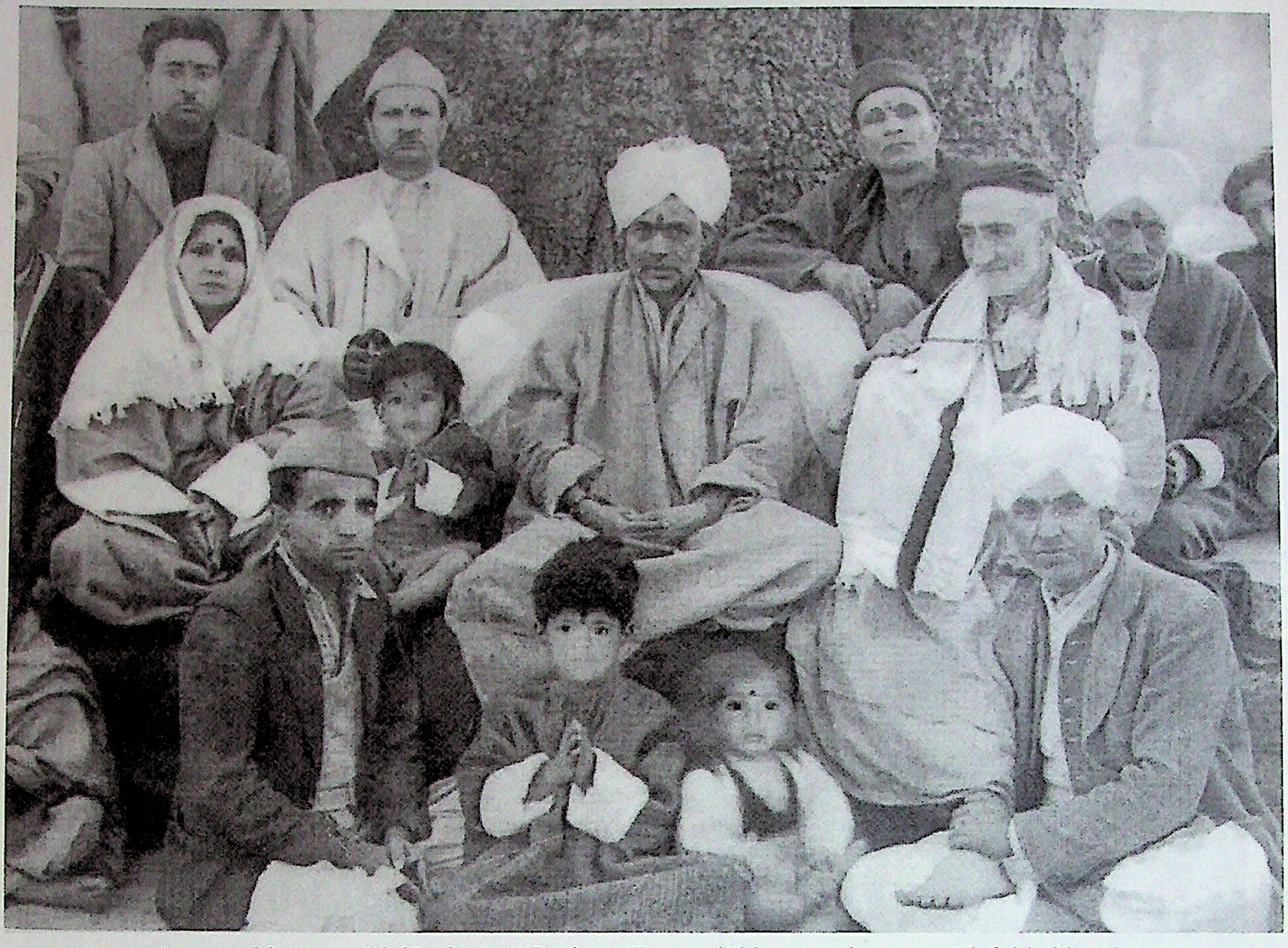
*A **Mekhla Maharaza** in **Dastar** with **Zarbab Laet**.*



*A family performing Pooja around a* ***Naag***.



18* *Wearing **Saafas**, young boys and a man at a holy spring.*



*A venerable man with his devotee **Parivar**. Young children can be seen with folded hands.*



*A group of close relatives and near ones on an outing to a religious place accompanied by a music party which entertained them with devotional **Bhajans**.*



A family with a ***Mahatma*** and his disciples.



*A group of close relatives and near ones on an outing to a religious place accompanied by a* ***Mahatma****. Sharing the moments of* ***Paannyaar****.*



*Students with their teachers in a temple of learning.*



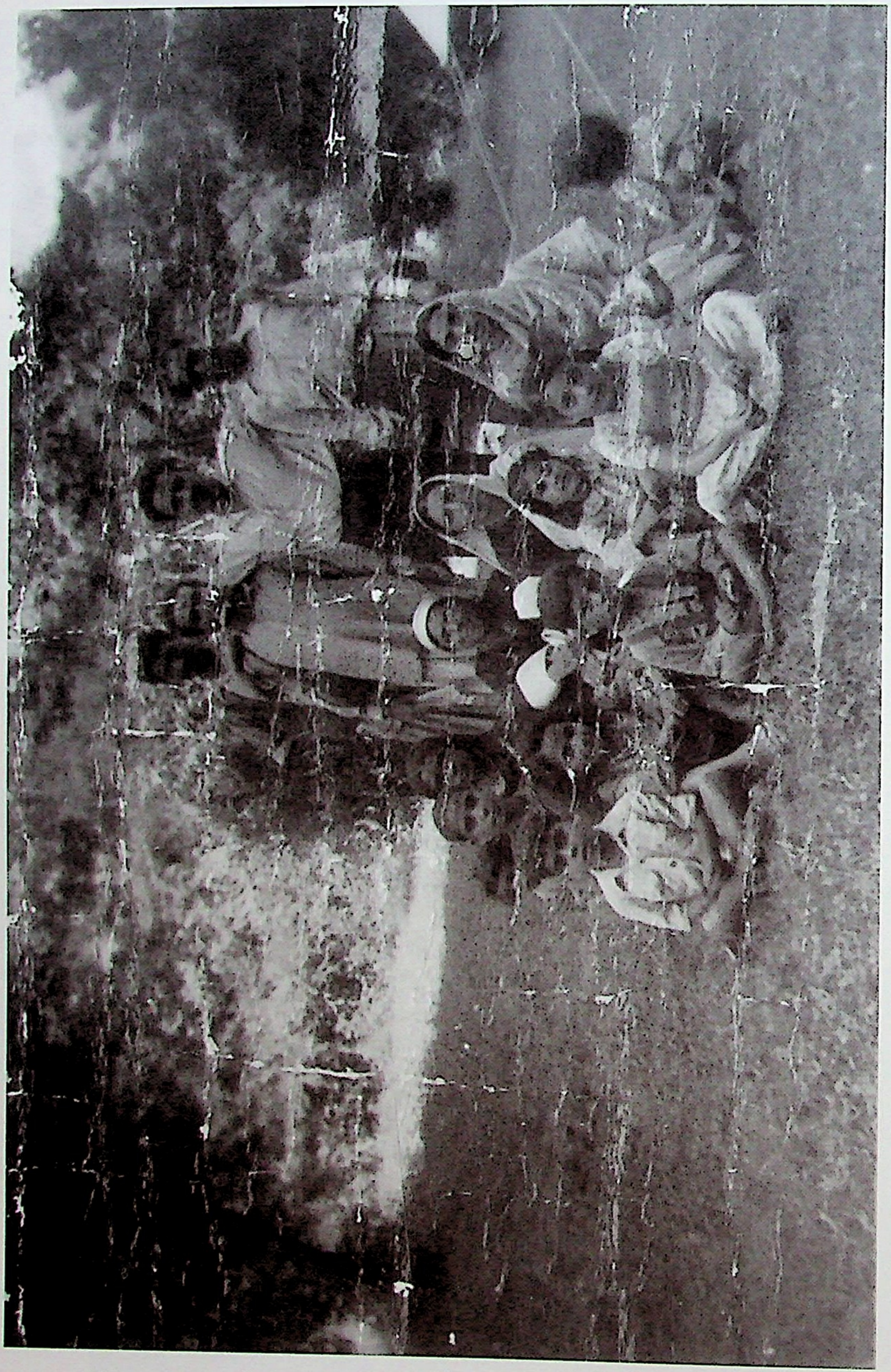
*Devotees with their patron saint.*



*Members of a **Kutumb** in happy times at an outing to a holy place.*



*At work or rest, always adhering to religious discipline.*



*Sharing the moments of togetherness.*



*Sharing a vision.*



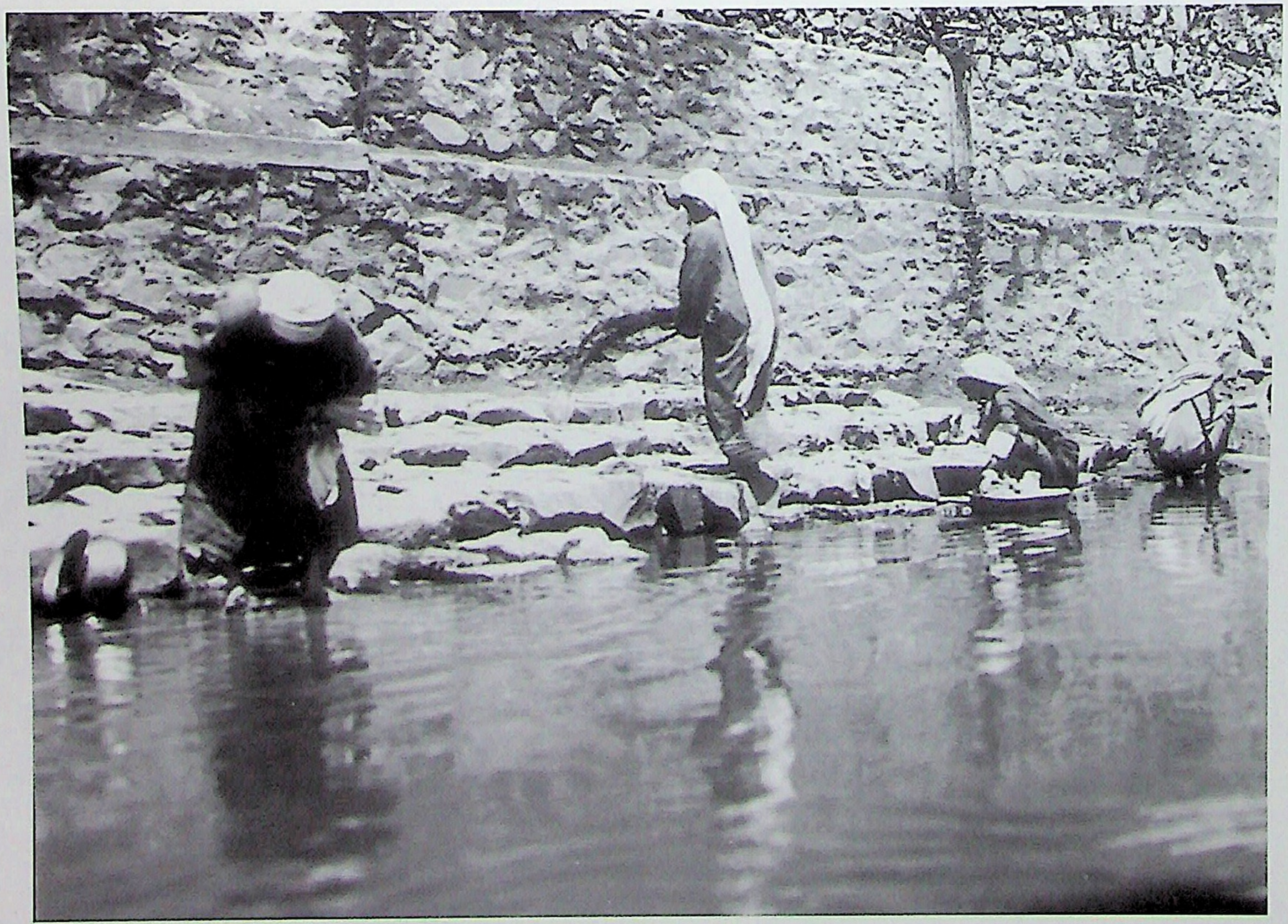
*Young men in modern Western outfits. The elders of the family and child in age-old dresses.*



19* *A woman repairing her **Daan**.*



***Mekhla Maharazas** receiving the **Yonepan**. **Pouff** with **Zangiya Thaal**.*



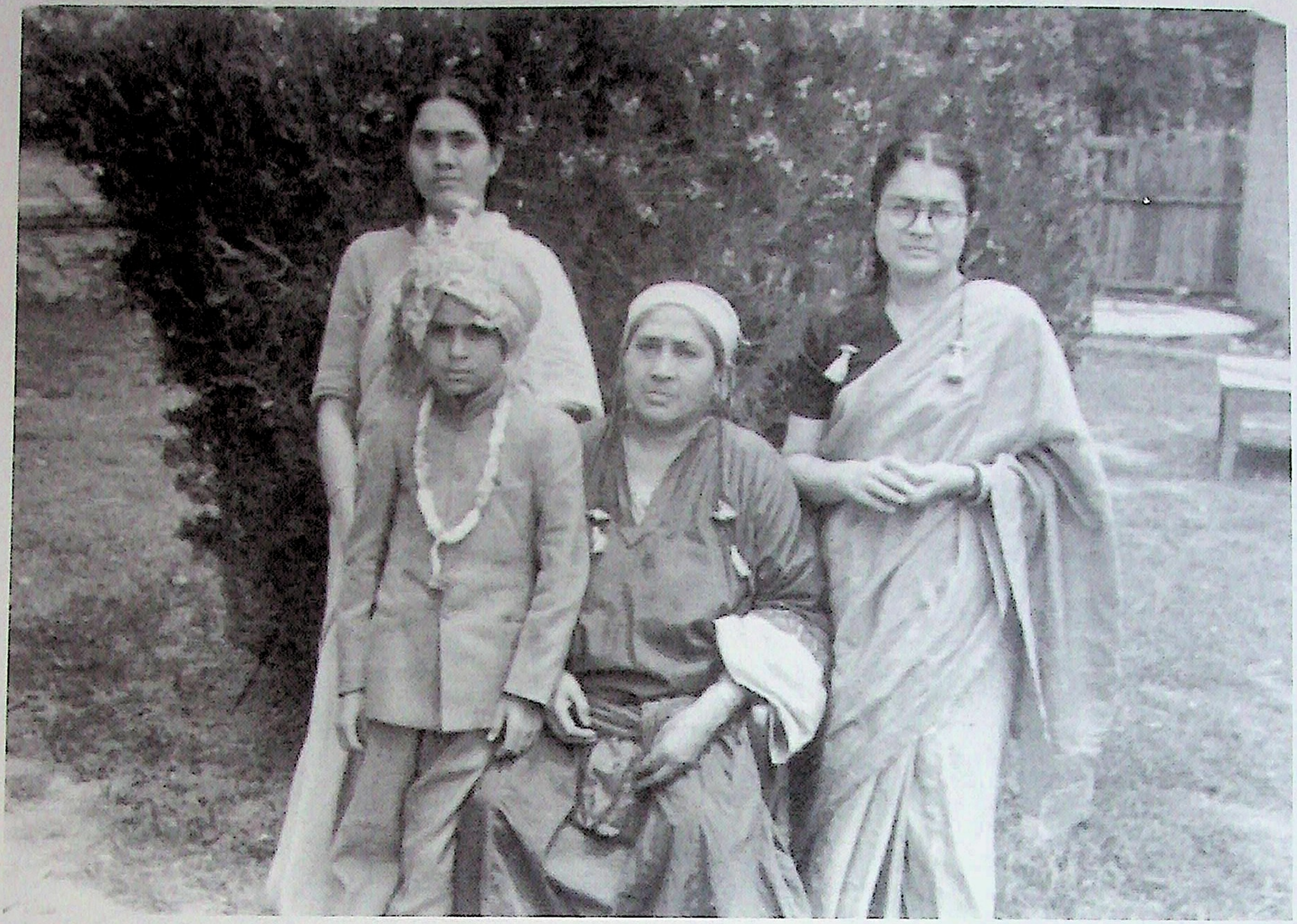
*Women from the neighbourhood at the **Yaarbal Botth** washing clothes and kitchen utensils.*



*On an outing with a saint.*



19* *Cleaning kitchen utensils at the* ***Aangun houz.***



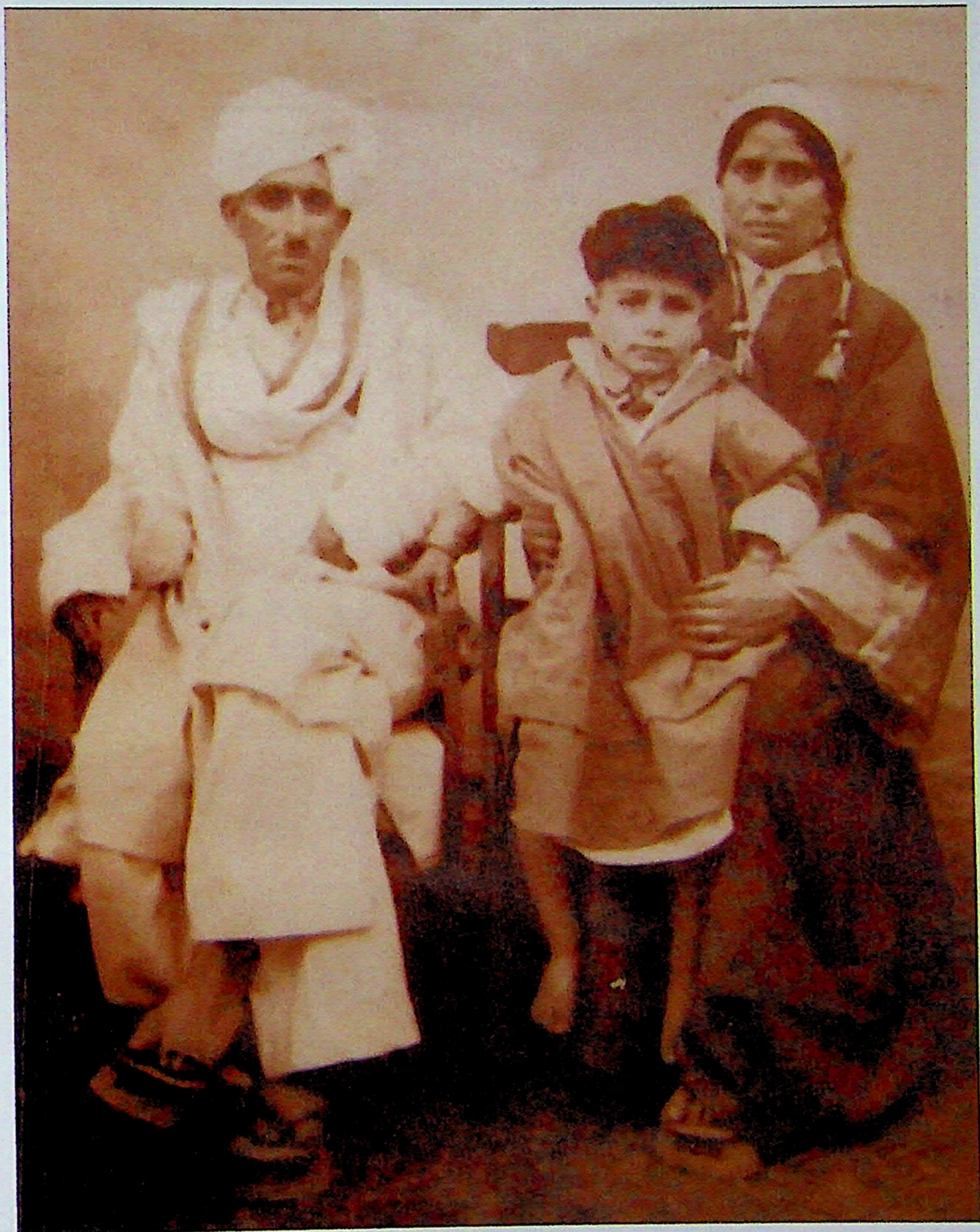
***Mekhla Maharaza*** *with his mother and grandmother displaying* **Atth**, **Athor** *and* **Dejhor**. *Grandmother's dress also showing* **Tarangh**, **Looeng** *and* **Narivar**.



*A couple with their child.*



*A young bridegroom (sitting centre on the ground) with his age peers and family elders and his bride (sitting on ground–extreme right). All posed with folded hands except the man in centre.*



48*

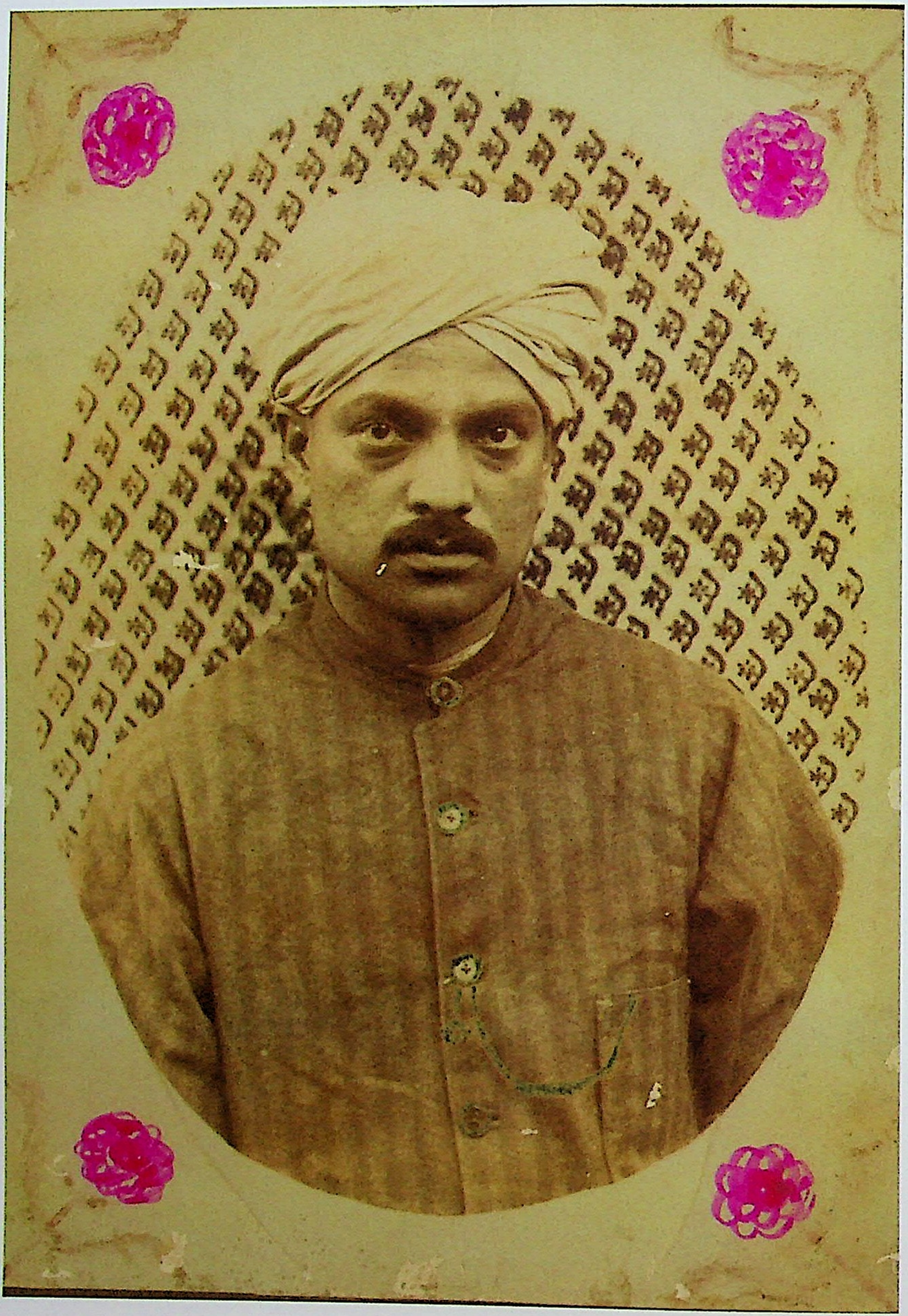
*No Reebok or Addidas,* ***Thaez Khraw*** *in feet.*



*With looks resembling those of the typical Indian traders in Hindustani dresses.*



*With son and grandchildren in the cosy corner of* ***Aangun****. Closed* ***Panjaer Daer*** *of* ***Wout*** *and* ***Wuz Darwaz*** *of the house can be seen.*



*A man in* ***Dastar*** *wearing an* ***Achkan***.



*Men and children showing transition of change in dress code. Women in typical traditional outfits.*



*At the forefront in answering the call of the nation. Members of the City Relief Committee.*



*Two veterans of journalism at a picnic on a summer day.*



*A woman wearing a **Tarangh**, a long **Pheran** with **Laadh** and black bushelled **Athor**.*



A ***Mekhla*** *ceremony in progress.*



*A couple immediately after their wedding.*



*An old woman reflecting poise and grace.*



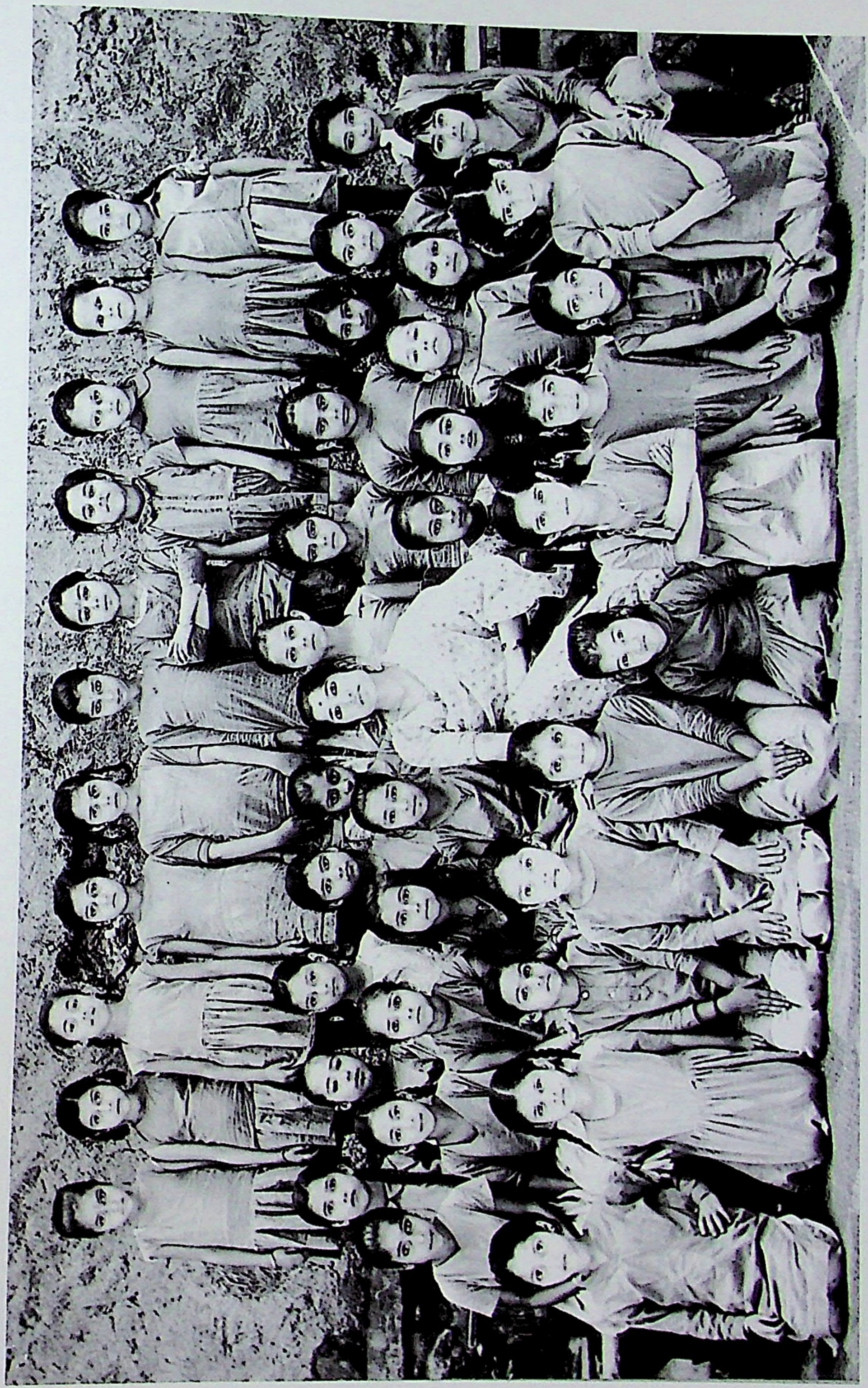
***Mekhla Maharazas*** *with the* ***Yazman*** *during a collective* ***Mekhla*** *ceremony in a family.*



*A young child-bride with the elders of her family. Men in typical dresses wearing* ***Mekha Paizars*** *in their feet.*



*A happily married woman with her children, husband and mother-in-law. A **Kathkar** of the garden can be seen in the background.*



*Girl students with their teacher from a neighbourhood school. (Radiant eyes looking to a bright future)*



*With his grandmother, a* ***Mekhla Maharaza*** *in* ***Achkan*** *and* ***Dastar****.*



In attendance to an enlightened soul of saintly disposition.



*Pious minds in religious contemplation.*



19* *Together on the occasion of an anniversary celebration connected to a holy place.*



42* *Sipping hot tea in a **Khos** held over a **Towlia**. A traditional way of taking tea.*



*Sitting comfortably in the cosiness of the living room of their house.*



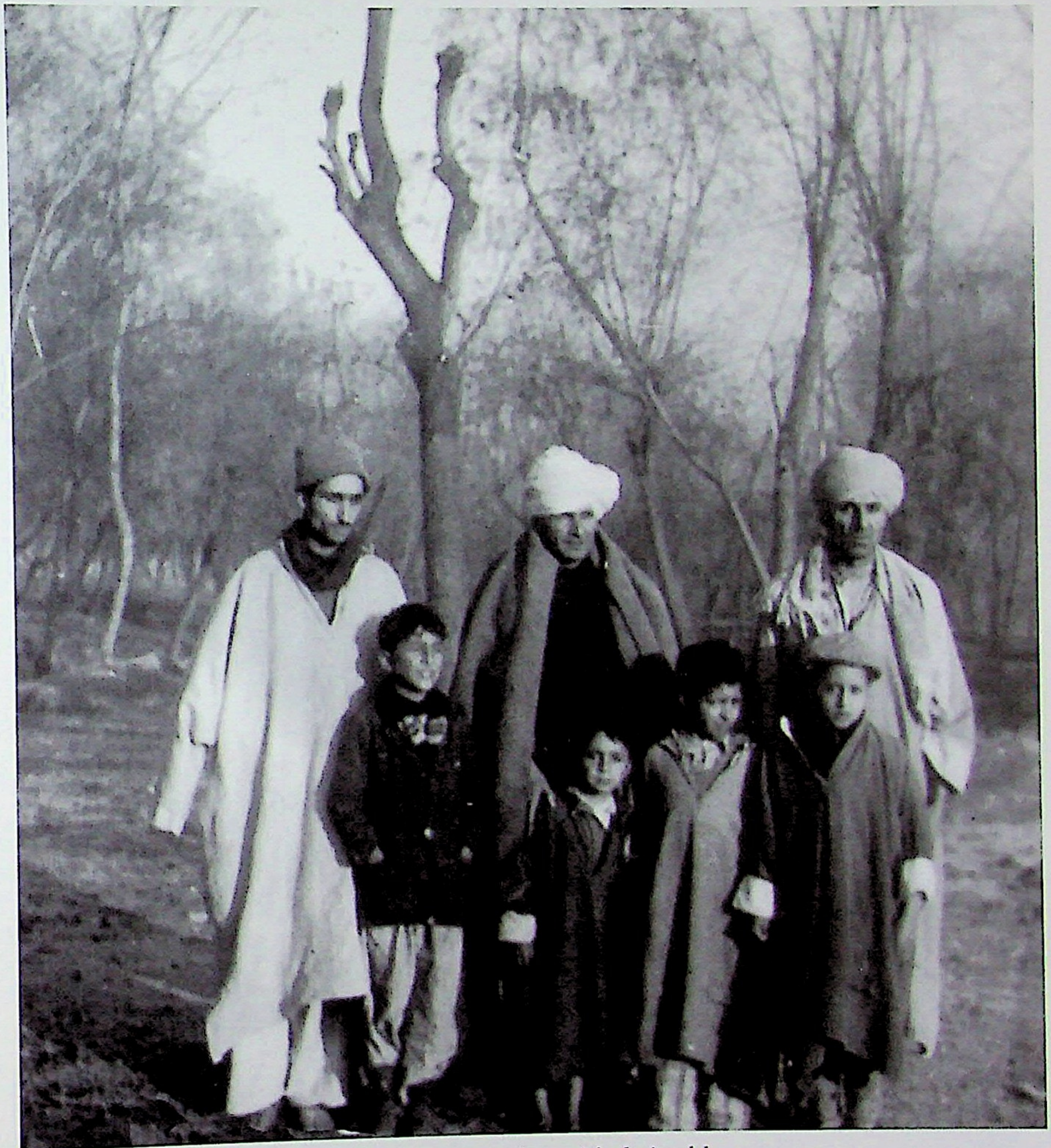
A ***Hush*** *with her* ***Nosh.***



19* *An infant in his mother's warm and protective lap.*



*The youngest in the group wearing a Ladakhi Gomcha. Others in collared* ***Pherans****.*
*(Change visible in dress code)*



*Children on an outing with their elders.*



*Smiling daughter-in-law with her serene mother-in-law and other members of her family.*



*Preparing **Waer (Naveed)** in a **Deecha** over a stove while the children are eagerly awaiting to recieve their share. **Dul** and **Tabaeche** are seen.*



*Dressed in robes of considerable antiquity. All heads covered, men wearing **Saafas** and women in **Tarangh**.*



*Family* ***Guru Ji*** *chanting Mantra before putting* ***Teauk*** *on the forehead of the* ***Yazmanbhaai***. ***Narivans*** *on herself can be seen hanging.*



A *Mekhla* ceremony in progress.



*A group of close relatives and near ones on an outing to a religious place accompanied by a music party.*



*A family on way to their home after attending a religious function.*



Enjoying the warmth of mild sun on an autumnal day in the ***Aangun*** of their home.



*Ready for a **Sheen Jung**.*



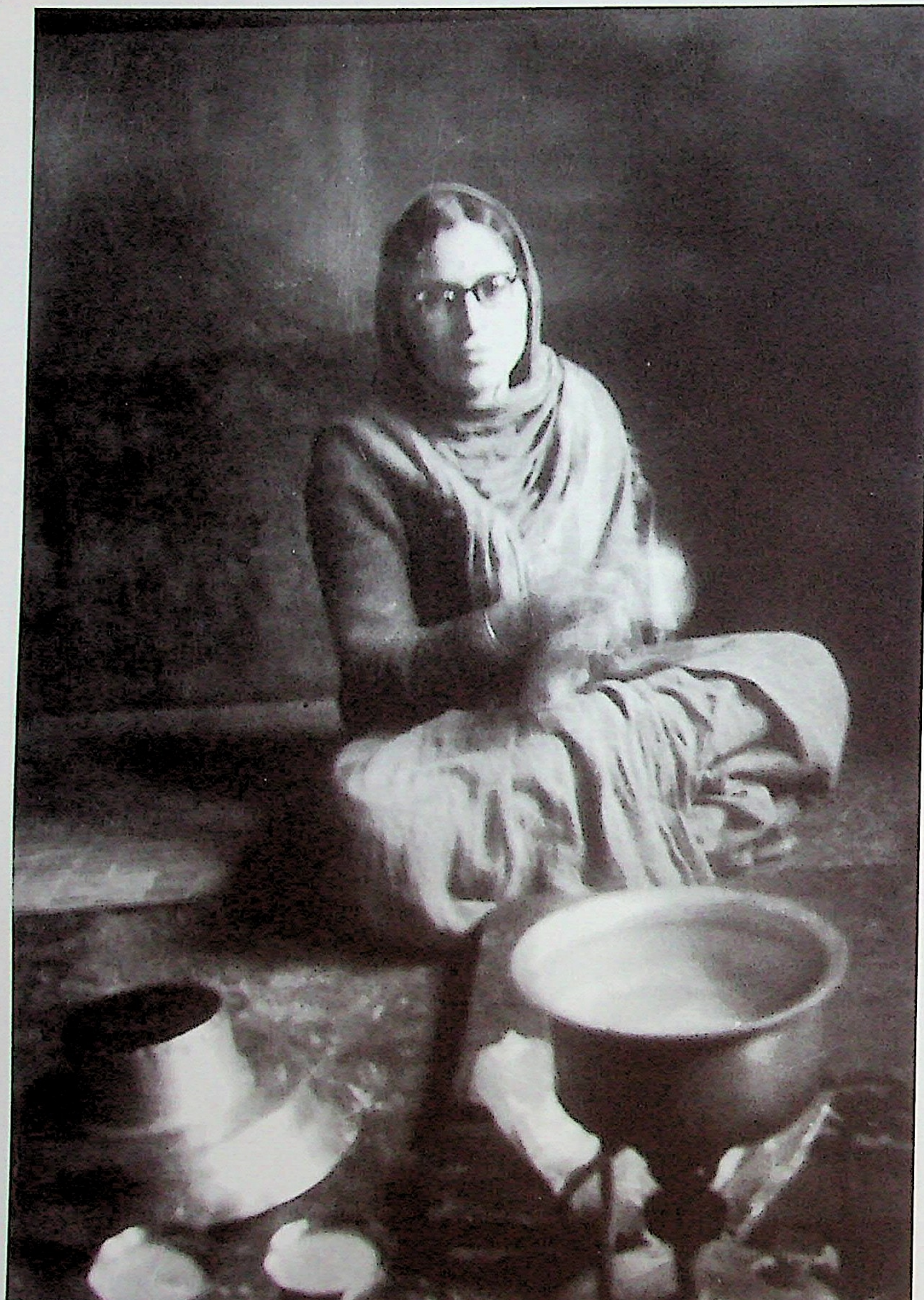
*A flourishing fruit trader with the retinue of his employees.*



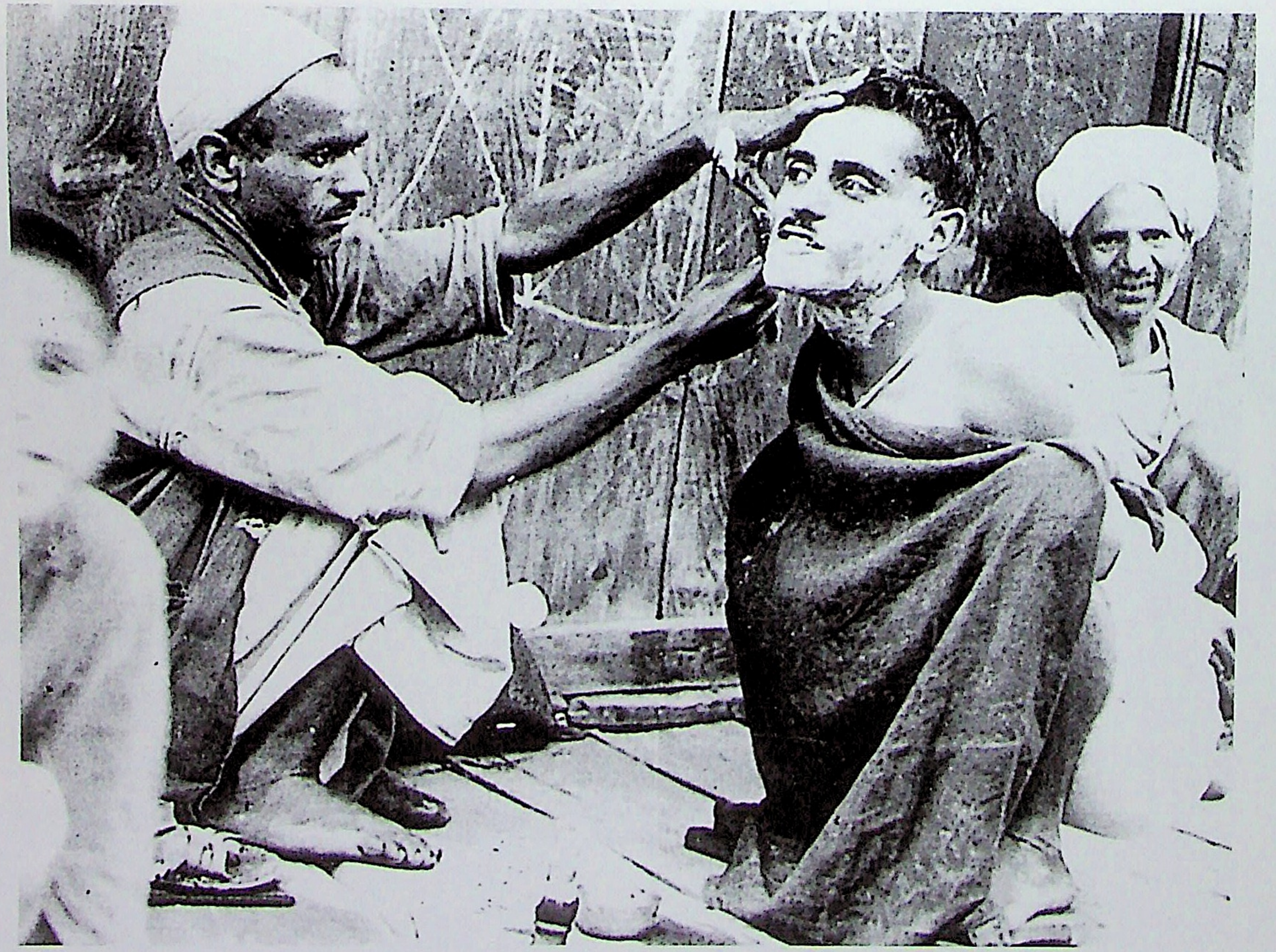
A **Mekhla Maharaza,** *surrounded by close family members, ready to receive* **Bekhya.**



*Young **Mekhla Maharazas** with the **Yazman**.*



*Preparing* ***Phakka Chai*** *on a kerosene stove for fasting family members during a religious ceremony.*



19* *Taking a shave from a **Navidd**. The other one waiting for his turn.*



*Performing **Pooza** during a religious ceremony.*



*Making offerings to the sacred fire.*



*Enjoying a day in the outdoor along with children.*



*Children radiating joy and innocence.*



*Members of a school football team with their devoted teachers.*



19* *Members of a household unit sitting on a **Gabba**. Also seen are **Kangar** and **Khraw**.*



*Teachers of the **Rajkiya Pathashala** in most classic attires.*



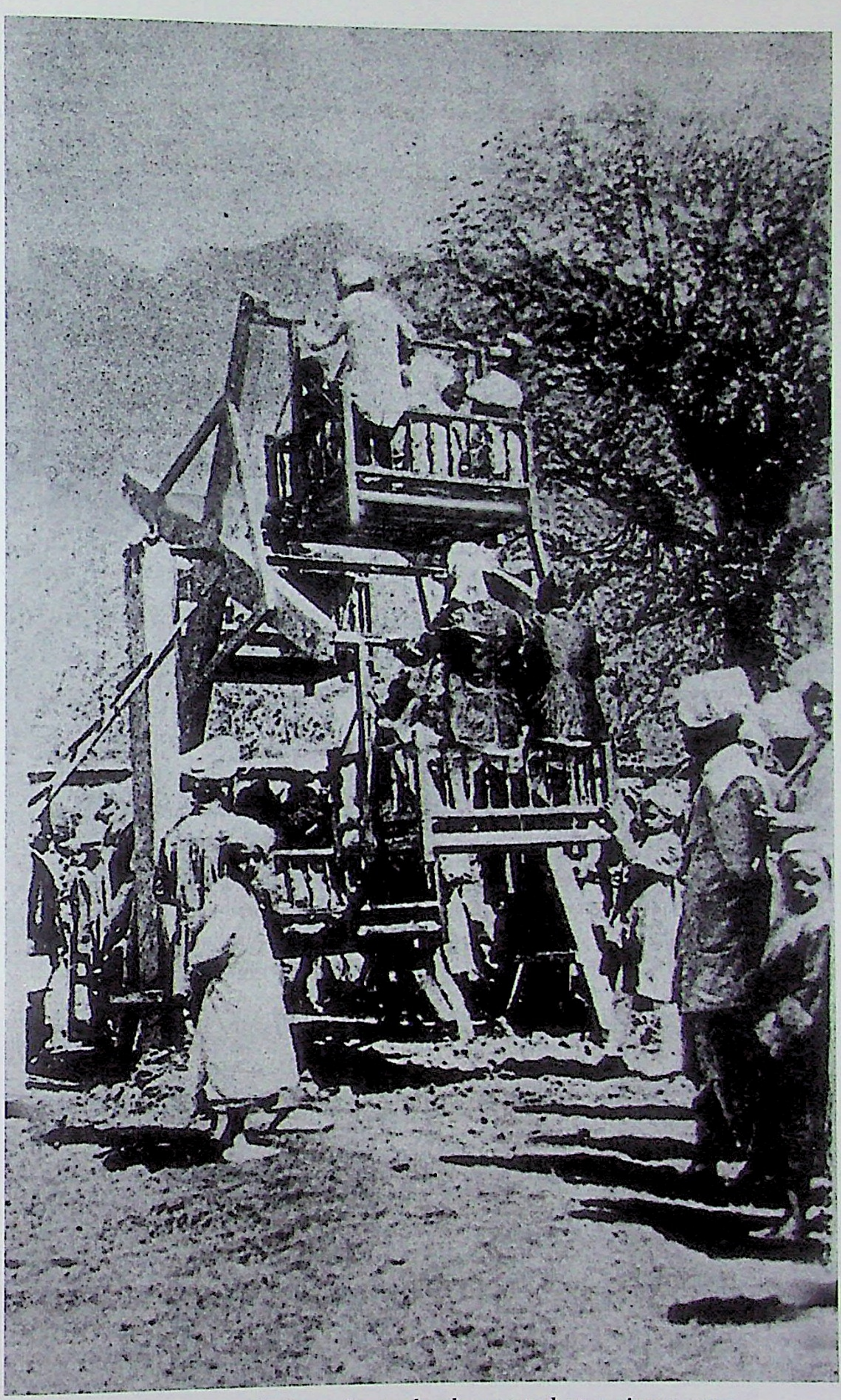
18*

*Wearing a Royal robe.*



18*

*A **Rais** of his time.*



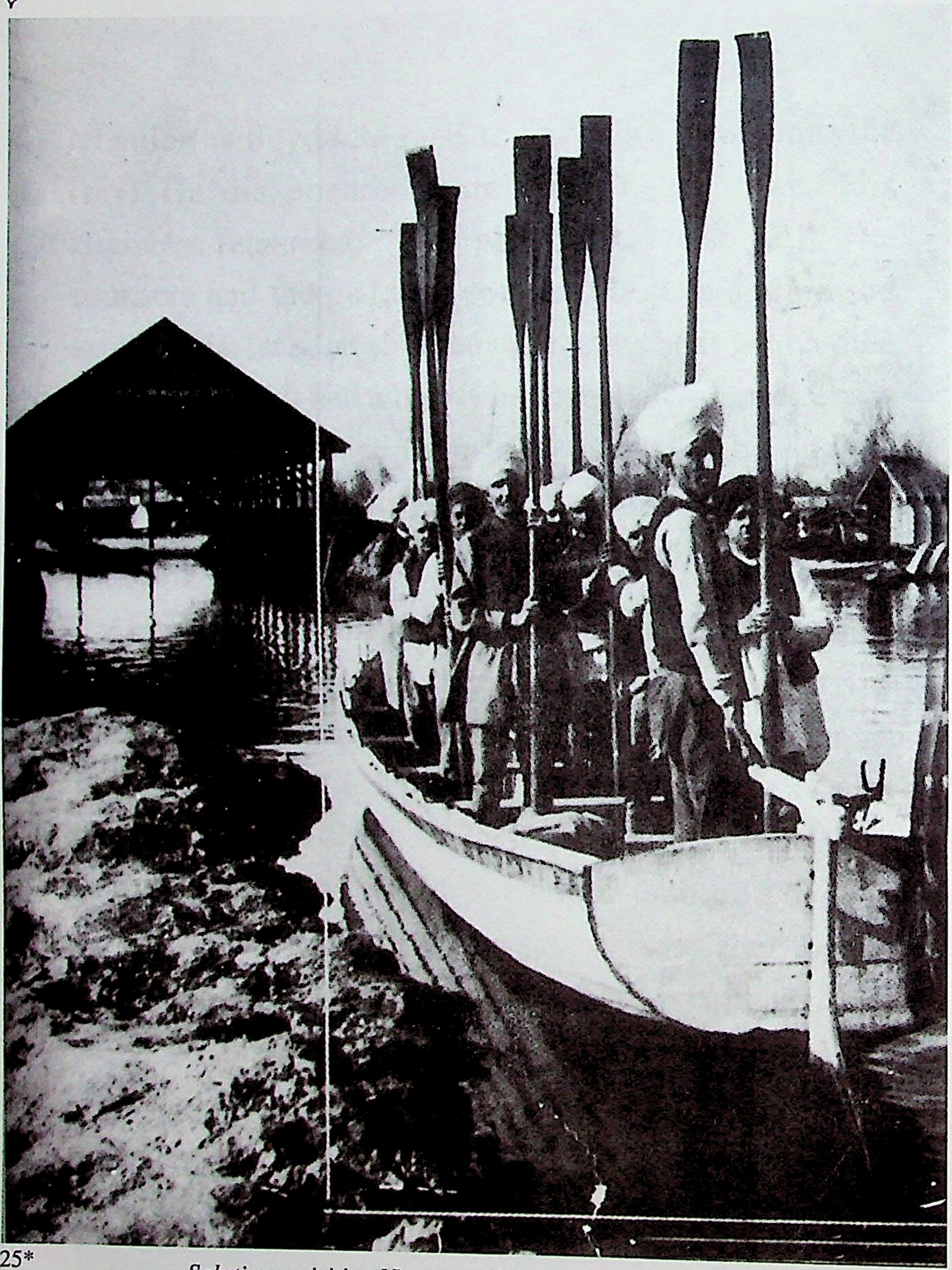
29* *Enjoying a ride in a giant wheel errected at a circus cum exhibition site.*



25* *Breaking a cursed taboo. Conducting a widow re-marriage.*



Women up with arms for self-defence.



25*

*Saluting a visiting Viceroy with oars up and eyes right.*



*At work outside a pitched tent in an European quarter.*



37* *A batch of early teachers with the pioneer of modern education.*



*With the big-wigs of politics.*



*A class in session in open air.*



*Artists, academics, writers and intellectuals with leading stars of the bygone era.*



*College students with their teachers.*



18* *Officials of a Government Department dressed variously but all are with* ***Saafas*** *on their heads.*



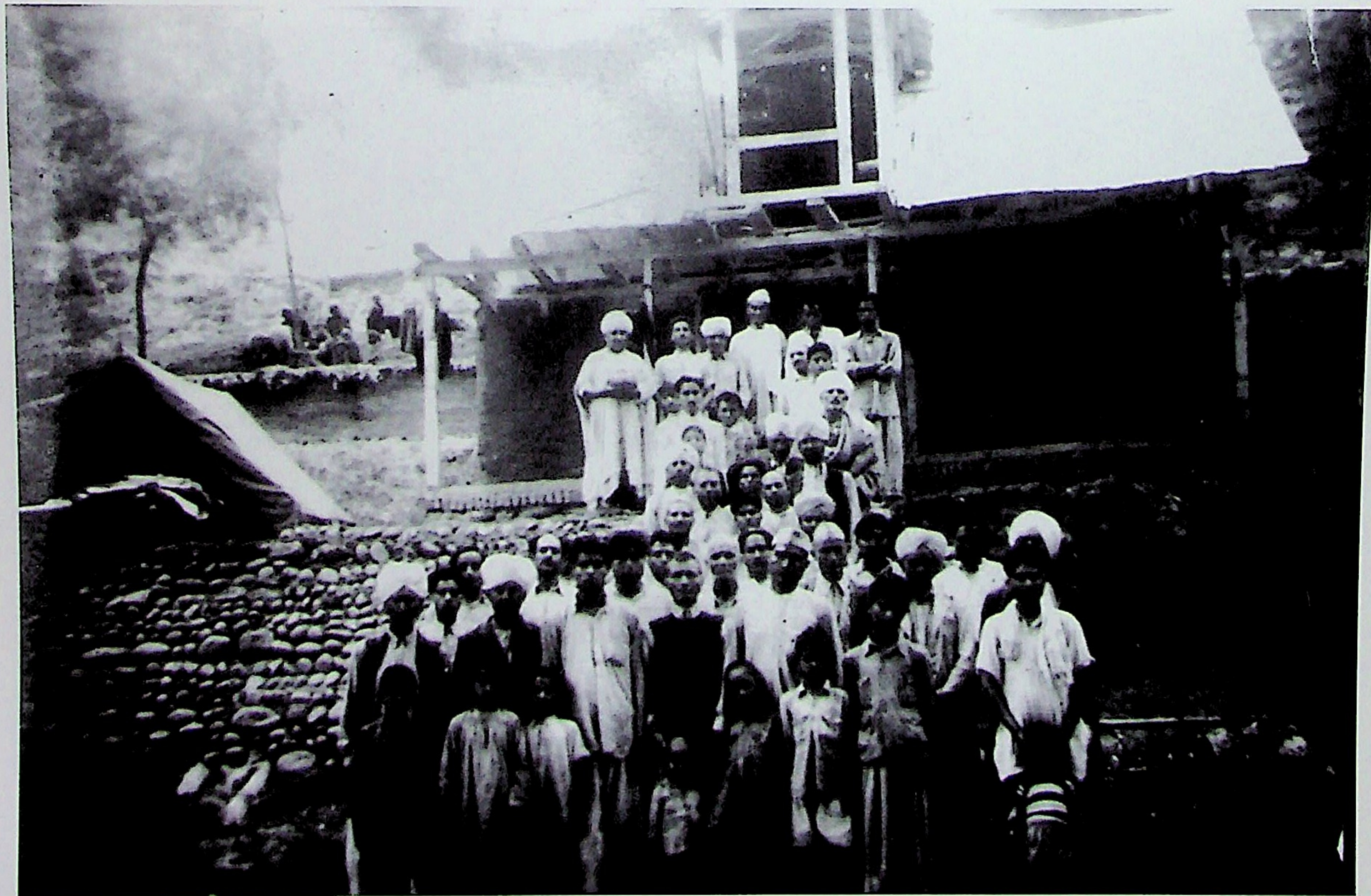
19* *Wailing relatives preparing a woman's body for the **Vemaan** for her last funeral rites.*



*Braving the cold. Dressed in both modern and traditional outfits.*



40* Scribes at work.



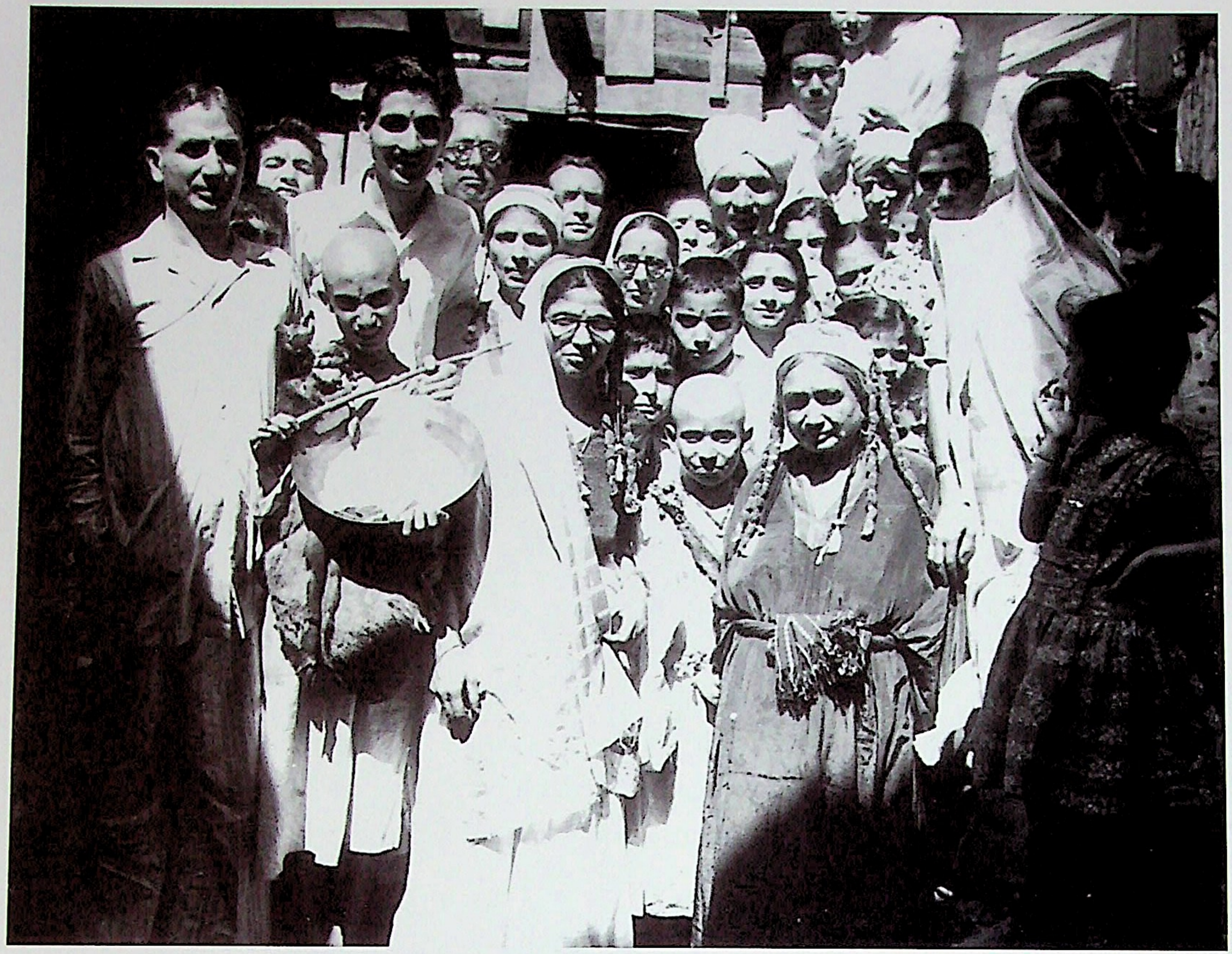
*A group assembled during an outing to a religious place.*



*Devotees at the feet of a saint.*



A *Mekhla Maharaza* with **Bekhya Thaal.**



*Family members and other close relatives during a **Mekhla** ceremony. (Women with **Narivans**)*



A ***Mekhla Maharaza*** *and his near relatives on way to* ***Yaarbal***.



*Family members and other near ones with the* ***Mekhla Maharazas.***



36* *Members of an extended family and other relatives with the* ***Mekhla Maharaza.***



*Family members and other close relatives during a **Mekhla** ceremony.*



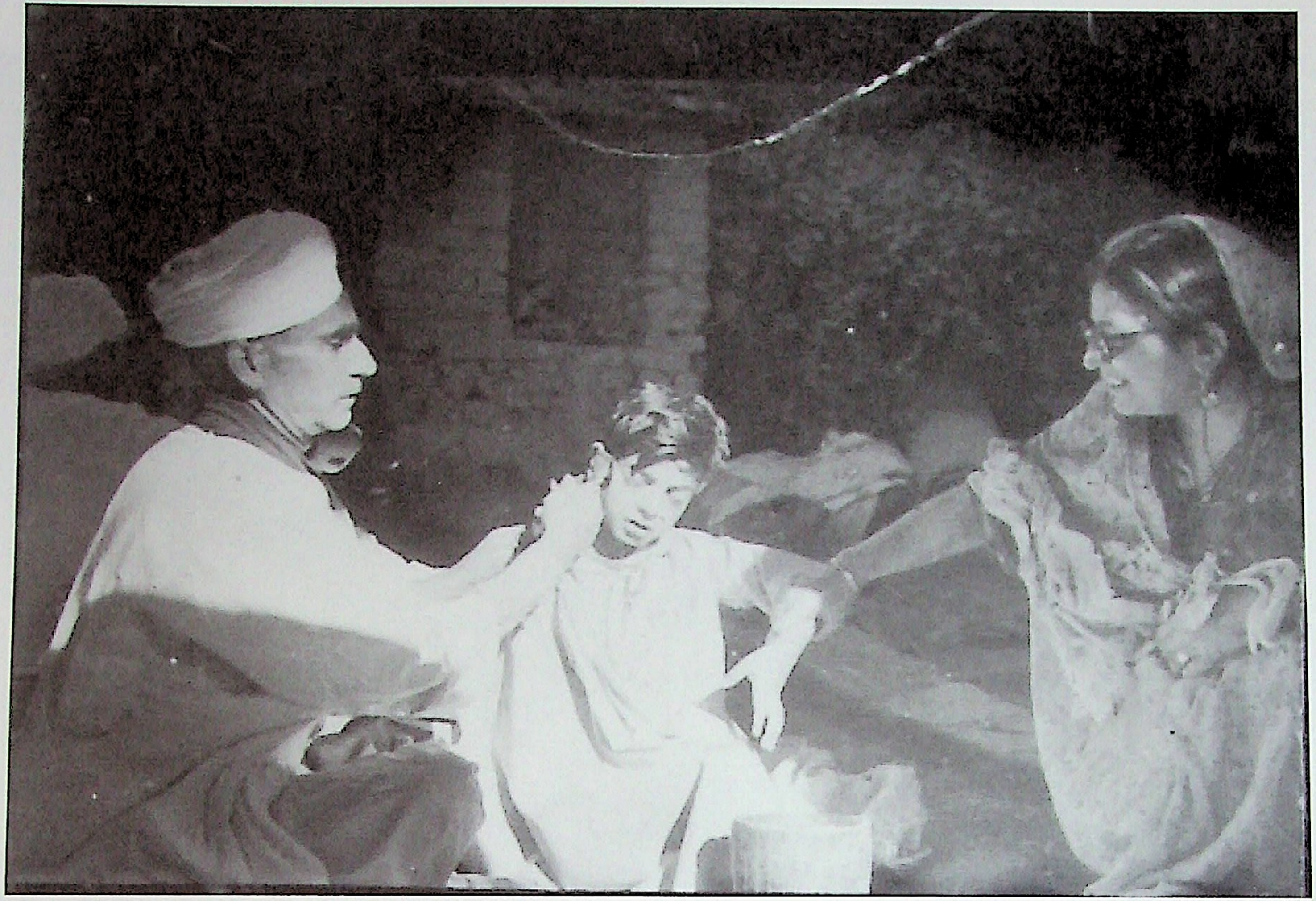
*Family members and other close relations during a **Mekhla** ceremony.*



*Family members and other close relations during a **Mekhla** ceremony. Old and young women with **Narivans**.*



*A group of men and children with a* ***Mekhla Maharaza****.*



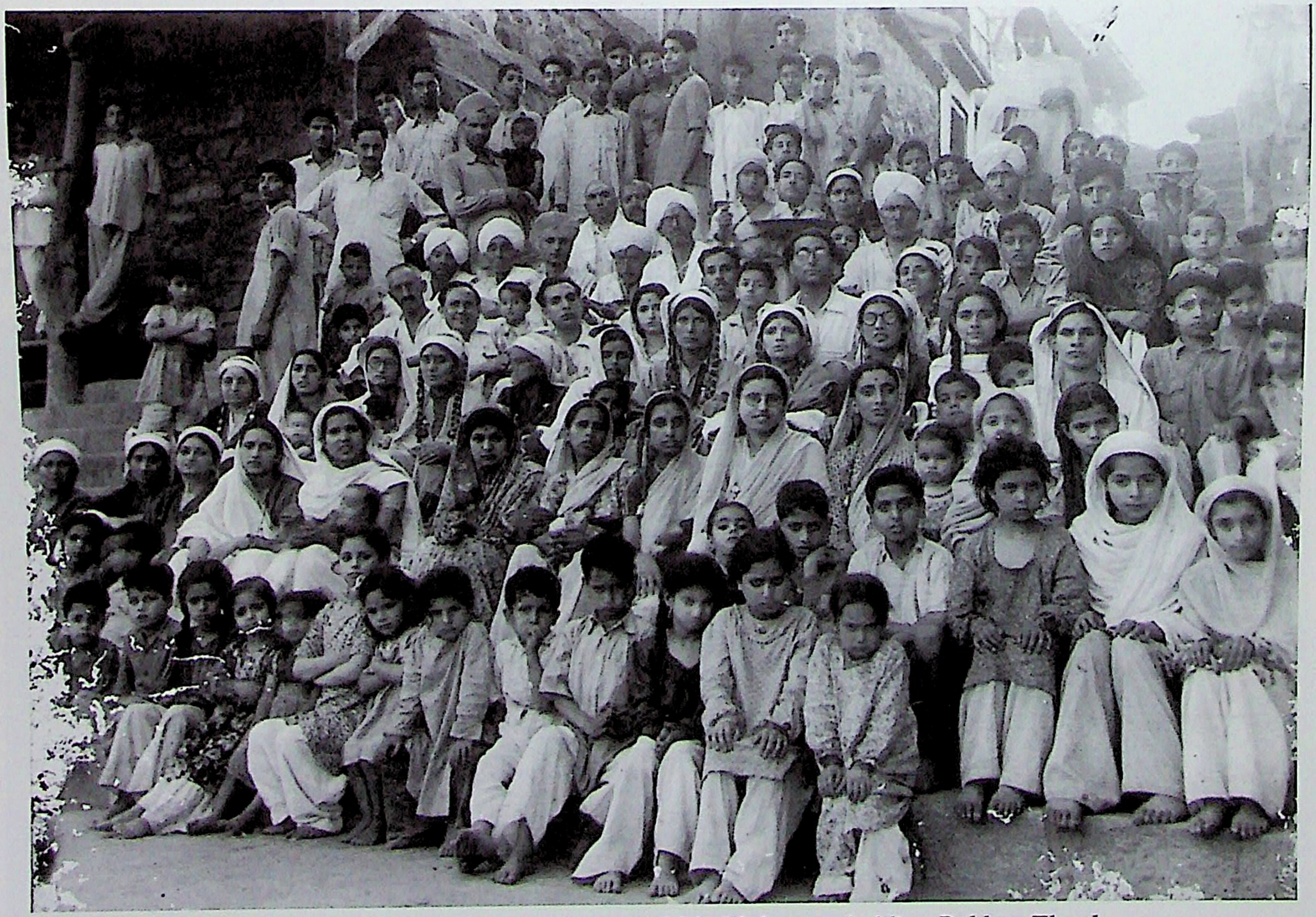
*A **Pouff** helping a **Mekhla Maharaza** to have a **Thool Kalla**.*



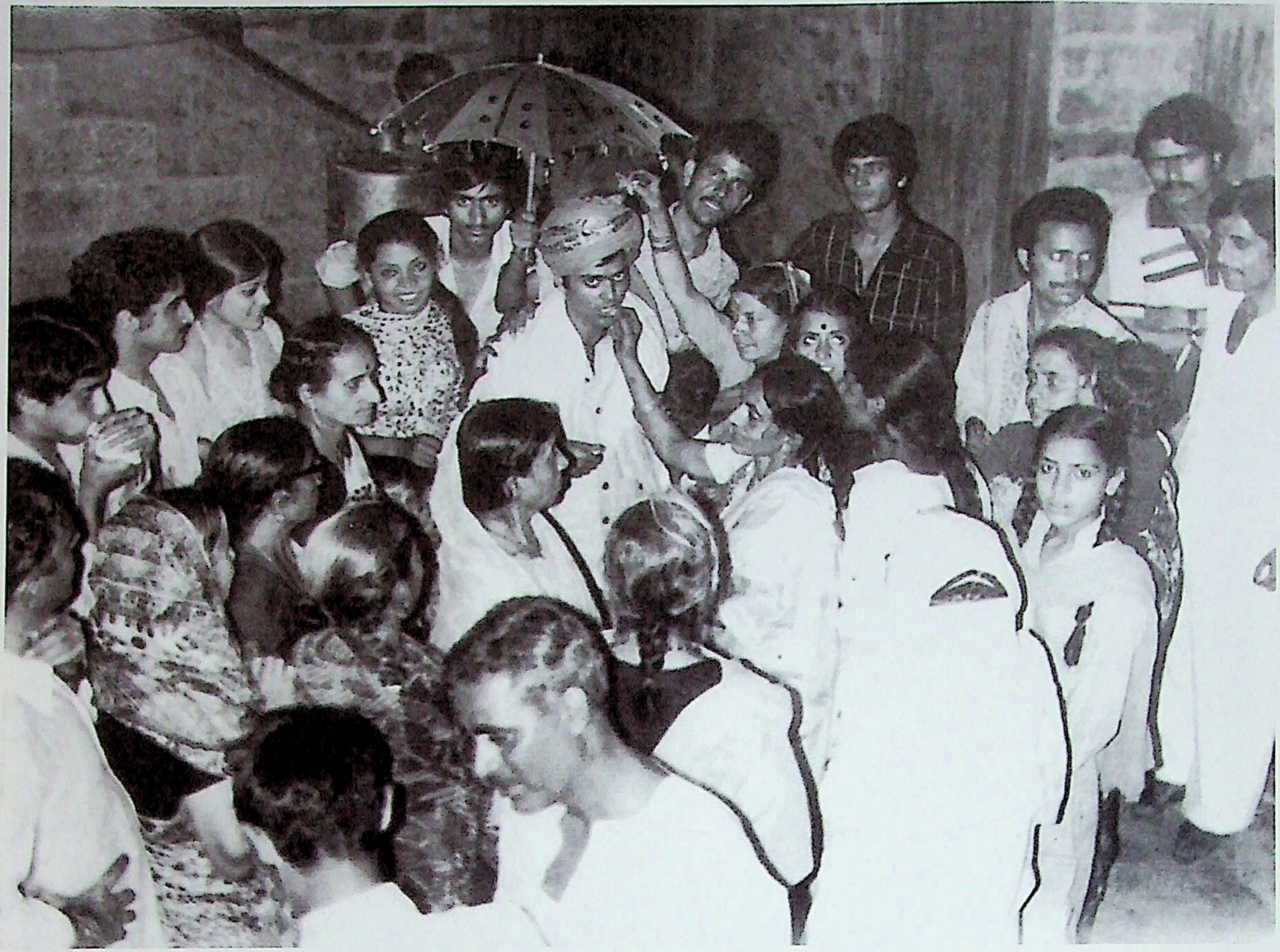
*A family* ***Guru Ji*** *squatted on a* ***Waguv*** *chanting* ***Mantras*** *while near ones hold* ***Zang*** *and* ***Isband*** *to bless the* ***Mekhla Maharaza*** *during a* ***Devgon*** *ceremony.*



*Family members and other close relatives with the **Mekhla Maharazas** during a **Mekhla** ceremony. Family **Guru Ji** holding a **Thaal**. A **Pachae Barran** is seen in the background.*



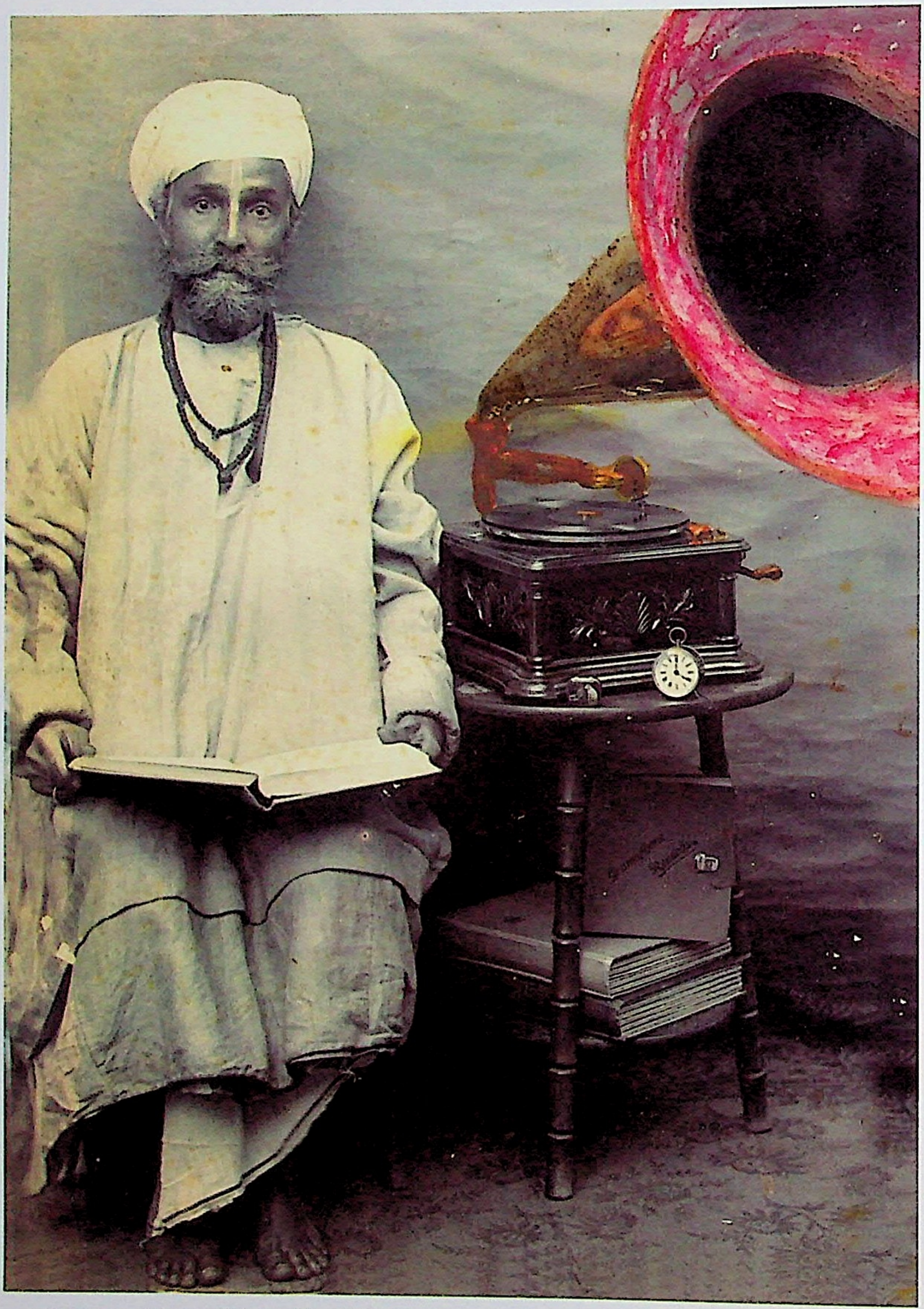
*All the near and dear ones with the **Mekhla Maharaza** holding **Bekhya Thaal**.*



***Mekhla Maharaza*** *surrounded by family members and other relations on his way to* ***Yaarbal*** *to complete the chore of* ***Mekhla*** *ceremony.*



*No matter what the age is, **Saafa** on head makes the appearance distinct.*



*A man with traditional looks but modern in taste. Hearing to music from a sanctified newly invented equipment smeared with a paste of vermilion.*



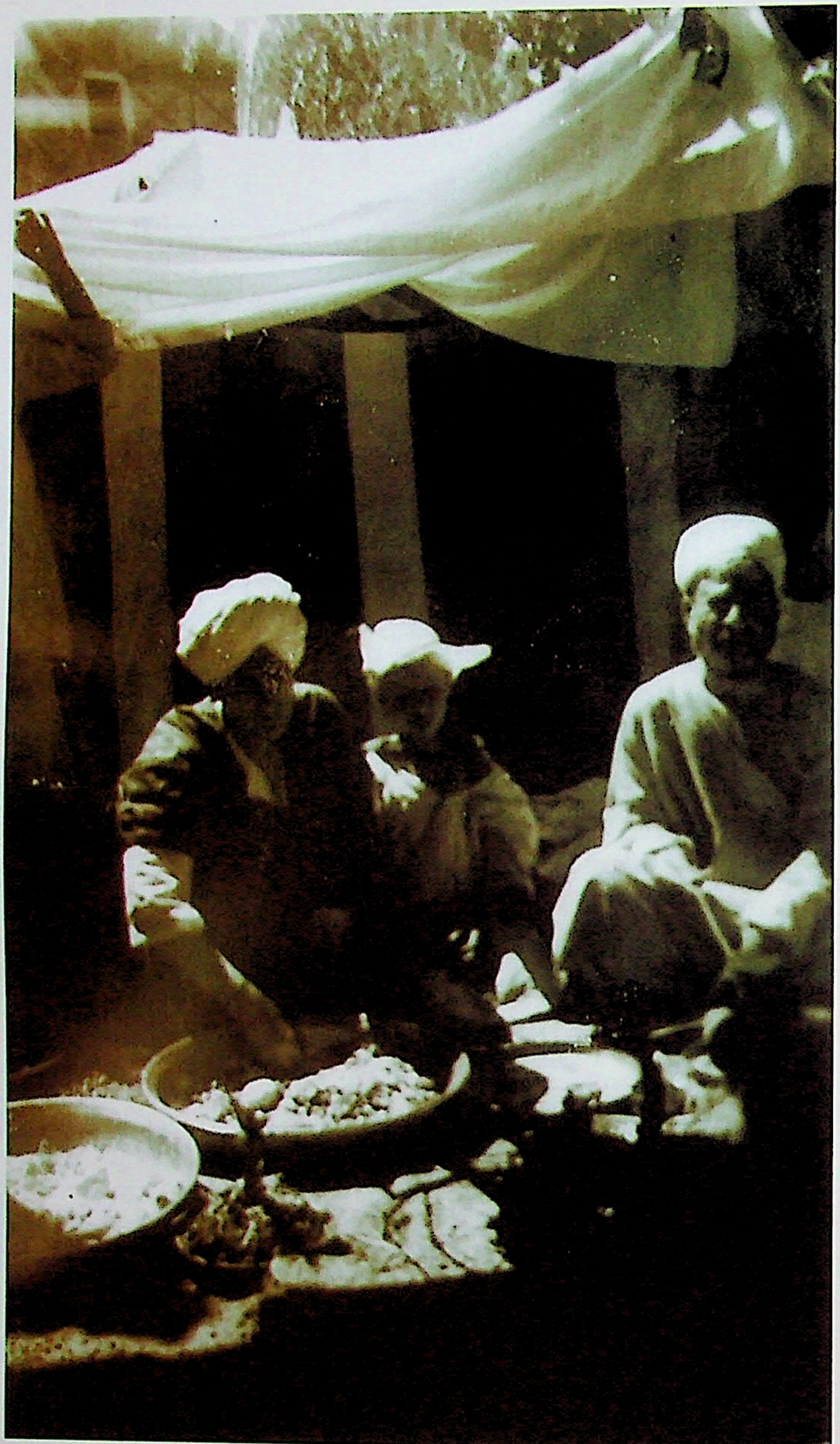
At a ***Mekhla*** *ceremony.*



*Young and old devotees in respectful attendance to the family **Guru Ji** with a young child trying to gauge the aura of the elevated soul.*



*Family members and close relatives during a **Mekhla** ceremony. Women with **Narivans**. No one is bare head.*



*Making offerings to the sacred fire during a **Mekhla** ceremony.*
***Mekhla Maharaza** in skull cap.*



*A just wedded couple on the **Vyug** ready for departure to their home (groom's house). Close relatives and neighbourhood well-wishers are lined up on either side. Some holding a **Kangar** in their hands to keep themselves warm.*



*Playing the school band.*



*With **Saafas** on heads and flowers tucked into the loops of fashionable coat collars.*



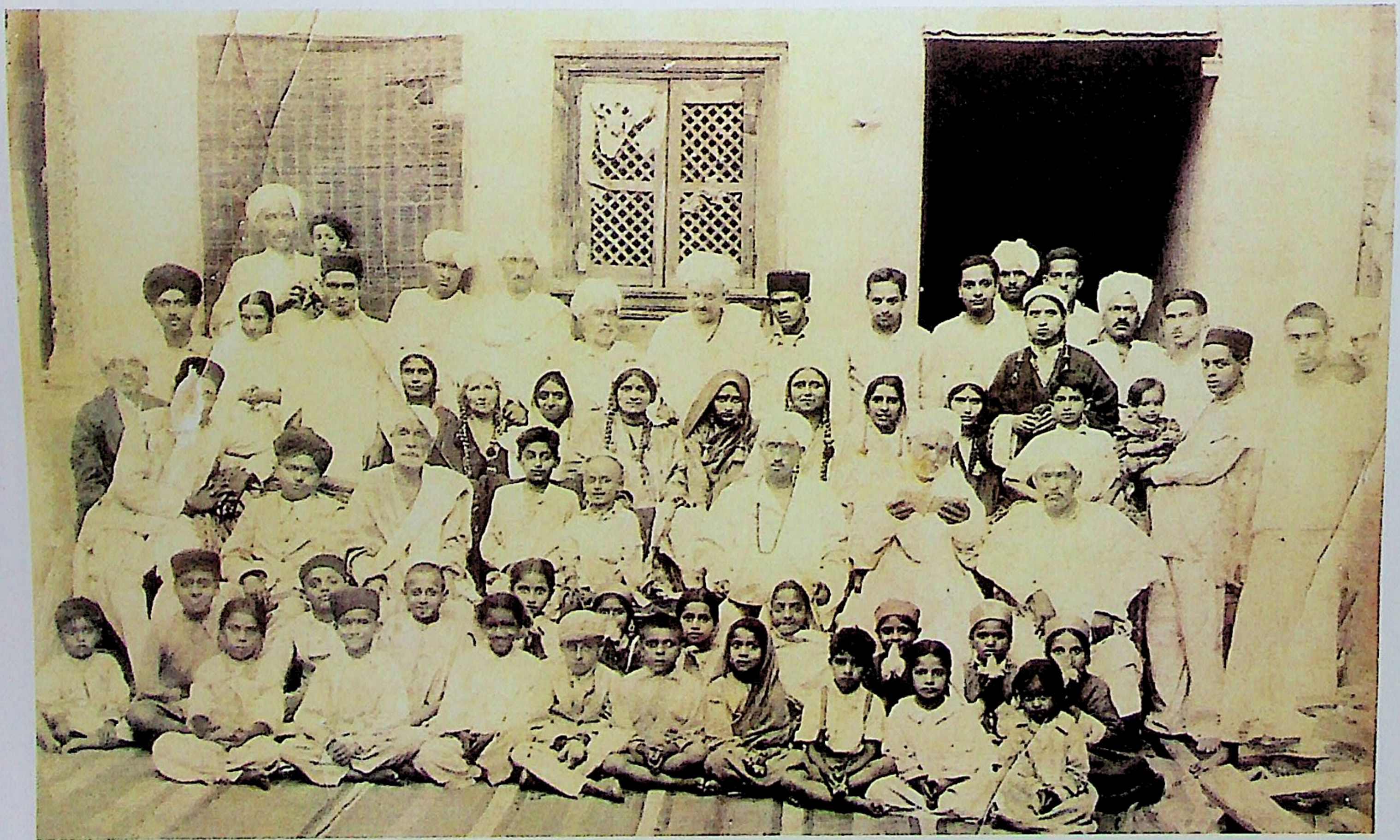
*A man in trendy dress, woman in age-old attire.*



***Maharaza*** *(seated centre) and his* ***Mahraen*** *in the lap of an elder squatting on the floor. No one in the group is bare head.*



*A group of elite men in pompous attires. Many heads peeping through the window–keen to get photograhed.*



*Family members and other close relatives during a **Mekhla** ceremony. Women with **Narivans**. Children squatted on the ground. **Wuz Darwaz**, **Panjaer Daer** and **Chikapot** can be seen in the background.*



*Attired in modern-day sarees.* ***Khraw*** *and* ***Pulhor*** *replaced by sandals.*



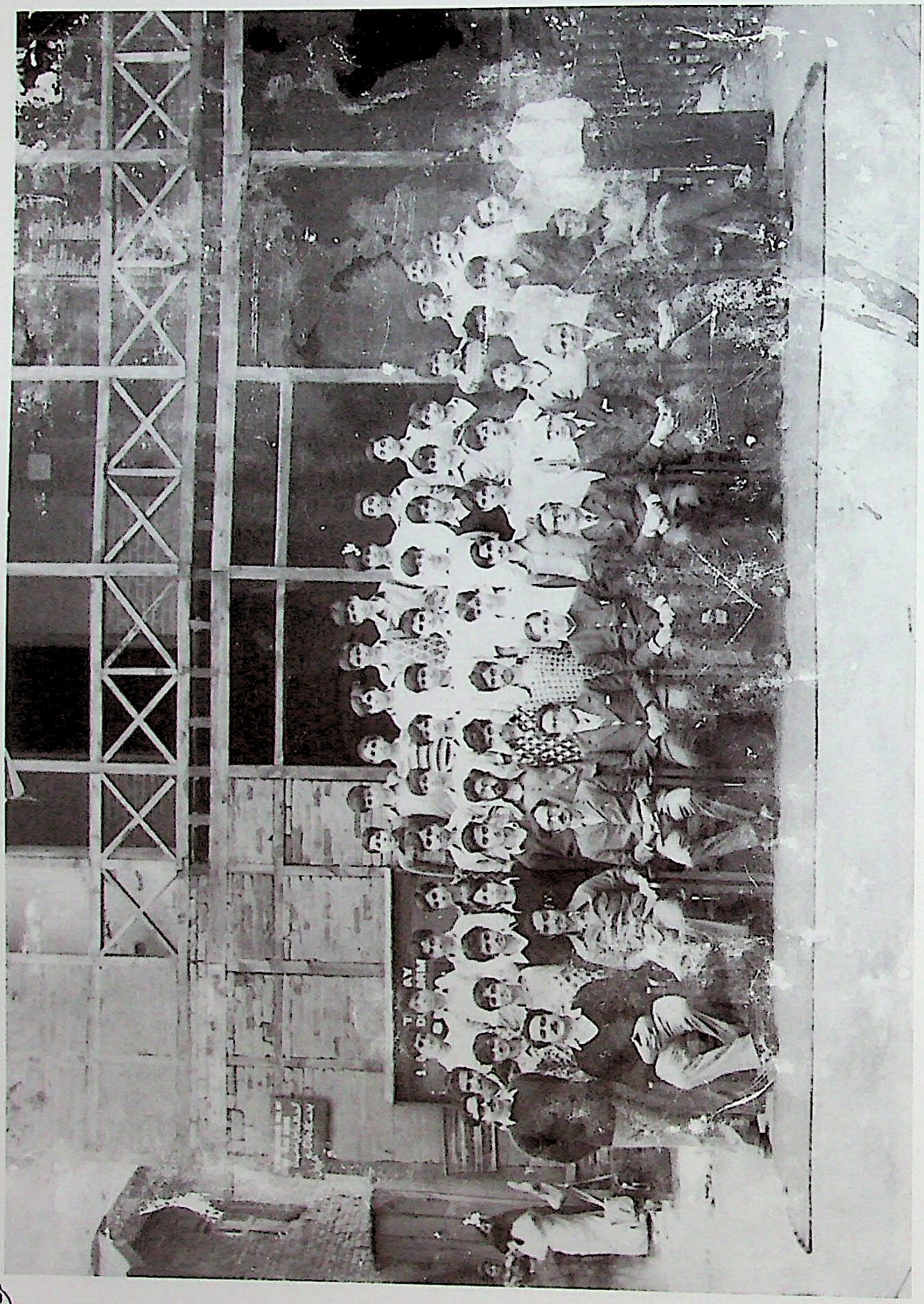
*At a festival gathering in happy times.*



*School teachers with young students.*



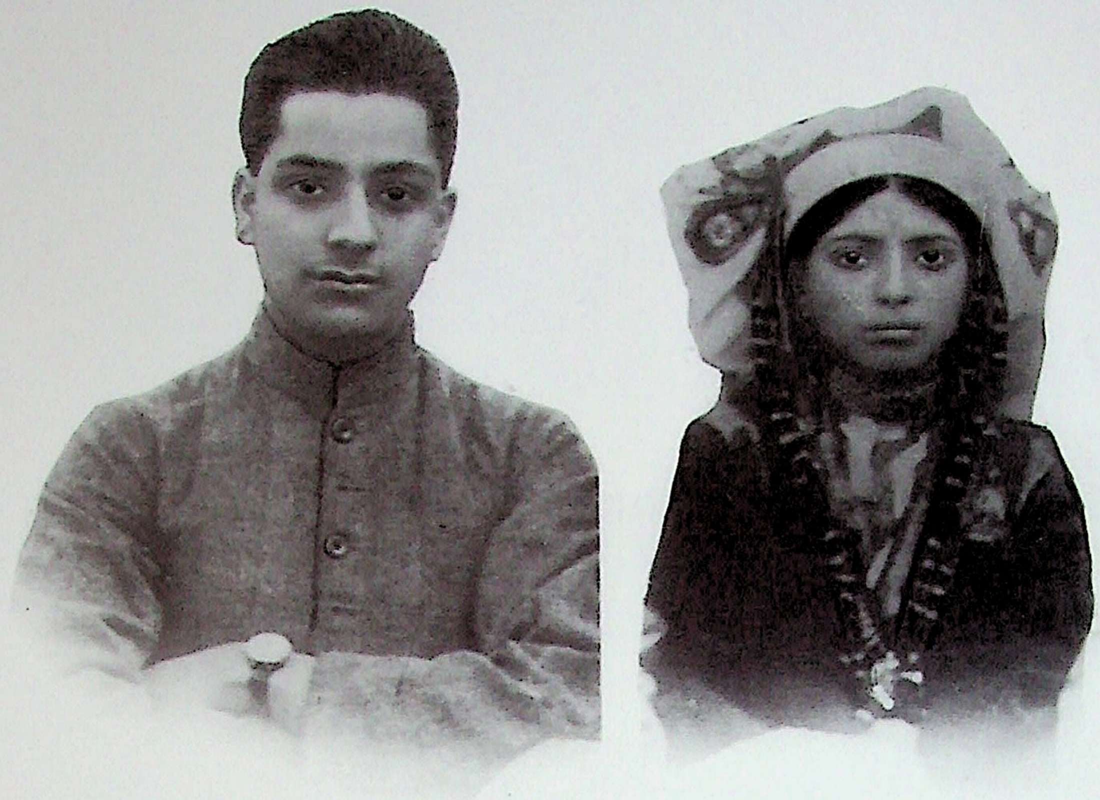
*Family members during a religious ceremony. Women with* ***Narivans***.



*Young students with their teachers.*



*Savouring delicious feast on the occasion of a marriage ceremony. Eating while seated, in **Thaals** on **Pattoes**.*



*A considerably young couple. Woman with **Taektaal** and **Narivan** during a **Mekhla** ceremony.*



*Youngest* ***Mekhla Maharaza*** *with* ***Thool Kalla****, other two without.* ***Zangiya Tok*** *and* ***Pahraats*** *filled with* ***Agnavattar*** *and* ***Waguv*** *can be seen.*



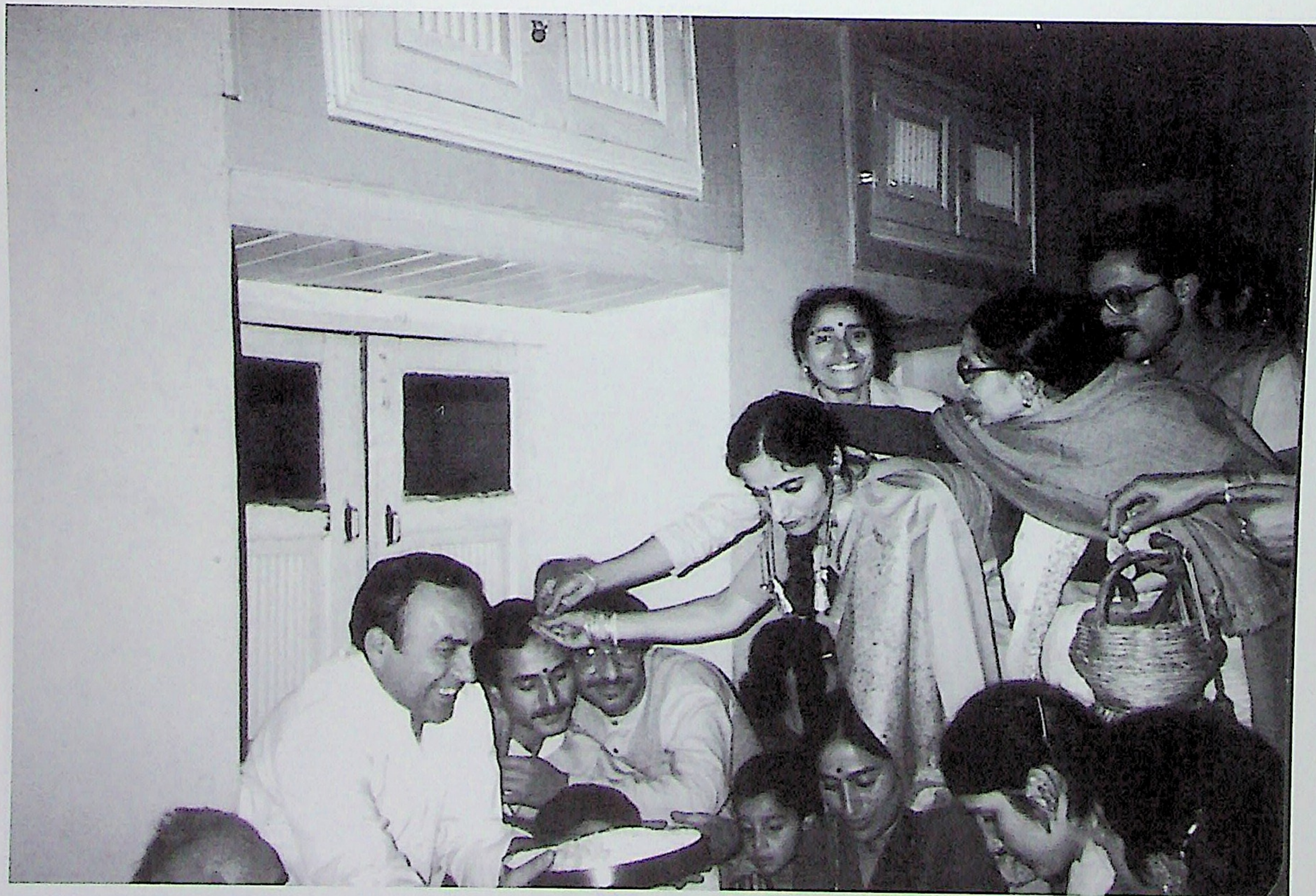
*Distributing **Mainz** and burning **Isband** during a **Mainzraat** ceremony.*



*A wedding couple in their ceremonial dresses. Gold bracelet and sacred* ***Yonea*** *worn by the bridegroom over the sleeve of his garment.*



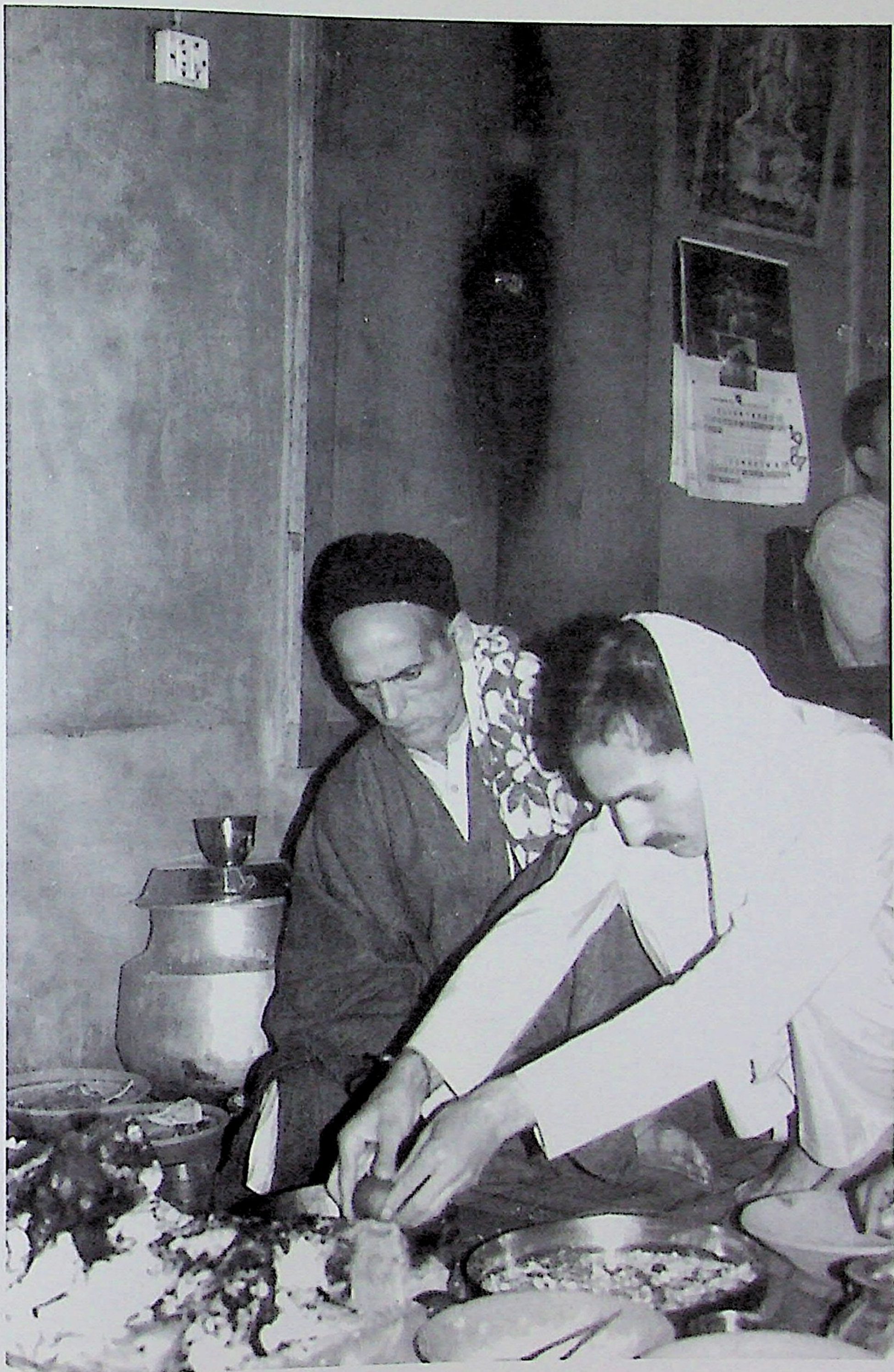
*Newly weds with their family members. A close woman relative helping the bride to be photographed without veil.*



*Wishing well of the bridegroom with ceremonial omens accompanied to the offering of* ***Isband*** *to* ***Kangri*** *fire. A close relative holding the* ***Zangiya Thaal****.*



A group of women and a girl enjoying a musical serenade during a ***Mainzraat*** ceremony. All eyes and ears attentive.



*Performing a religious ceremony.*



*Pride and satisfaction reflecting in the eyes of a mother-in-law as she stands alongside her new son-in-law.*



*Four generations on the occasion of a marriage ceremony.*

18*



During a break while performing family *Yagna.*



*A bridegroom with the dear ones of his family. Affluent and the elite in the group flaunting dangling watch chains buttoned to their waist-coats.*



Students and teachers at the close of an academic session.



*Young children with their respected teachers in a temple of learning housed in a temple of worship.*



*All–male group of a marriage party with the bridegroom. A gentleman (next to extreme left–standing) is enjoying a cigarrette. None in the group is without a **Saafa**.*



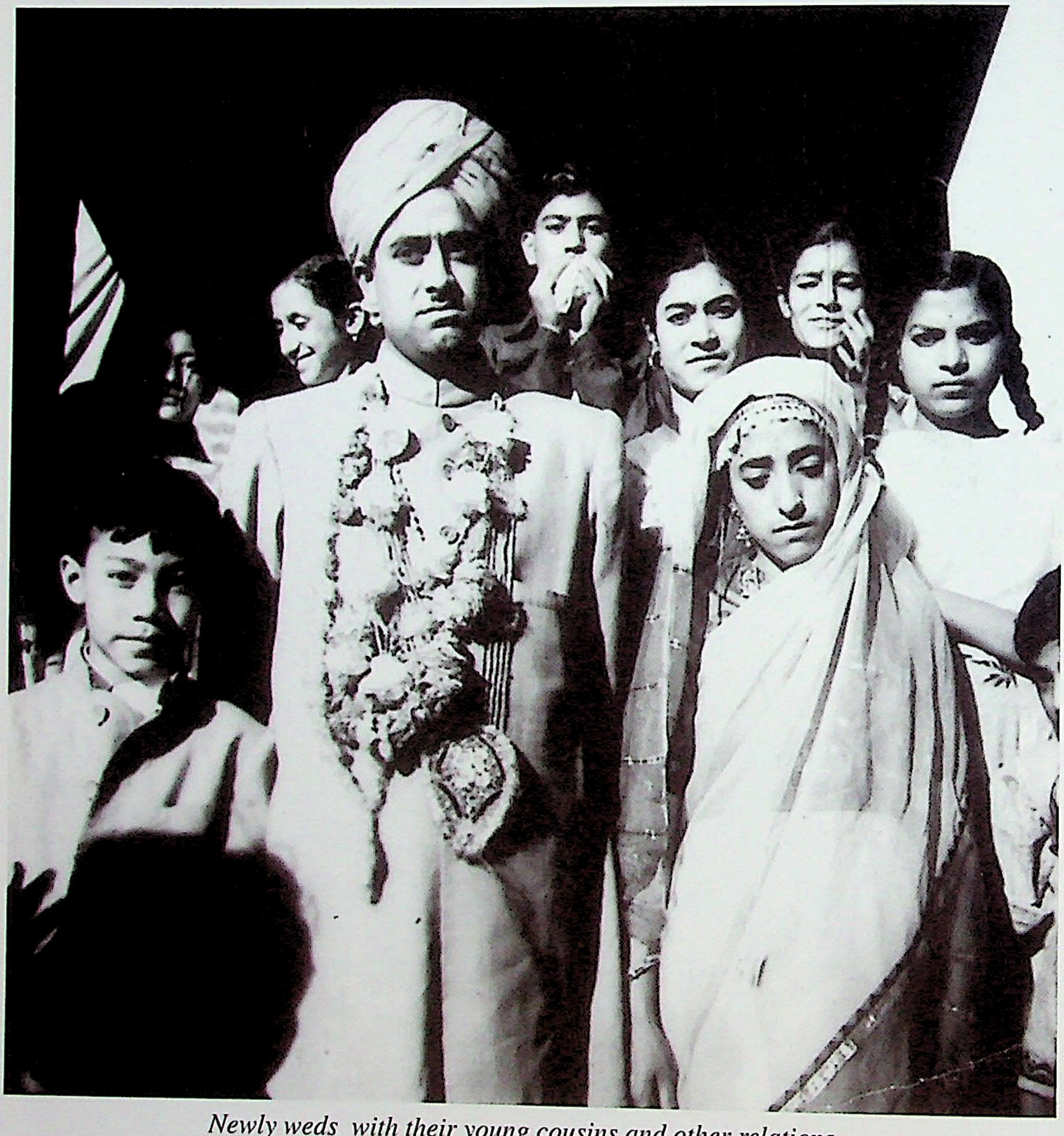
***Mahraen*** *and* ***Maharaza*** *being greeted to* ***Dwaar Pooza****.*



*Ready for a* ***Devgon Shraan*** *before the day of marriage.*



19* *A wedding couple during a break time after **Poashi-Pooza**.*



*Newly weds  with their young cousins and other relations.*



*A bridegroom standing on a* ***Vyug*** *in the* ***Aangun*** *of his home enclosed by a* ***Dauss****.*



*A young bridegroom with his totally veiled bride (head bowed down) and the elders of his family.*



*A bride and bridegroom with **Gang Vyas**. Bridegroom wearing **Mekha Paizar** in his feet while the bride is bare feet.*



*A marriage party with newly weds. The bride is totally veiled.*



*A bride being huddled into* ***Mamaji****'s lap through the* ***Wout Daer*** *for departure to her new home.*



*A bridegroom on a horse back with* ***Potmaharaaza*** *ensconed in his protective arms.*



*Venerable women of the family in typical attires with newly weds.*



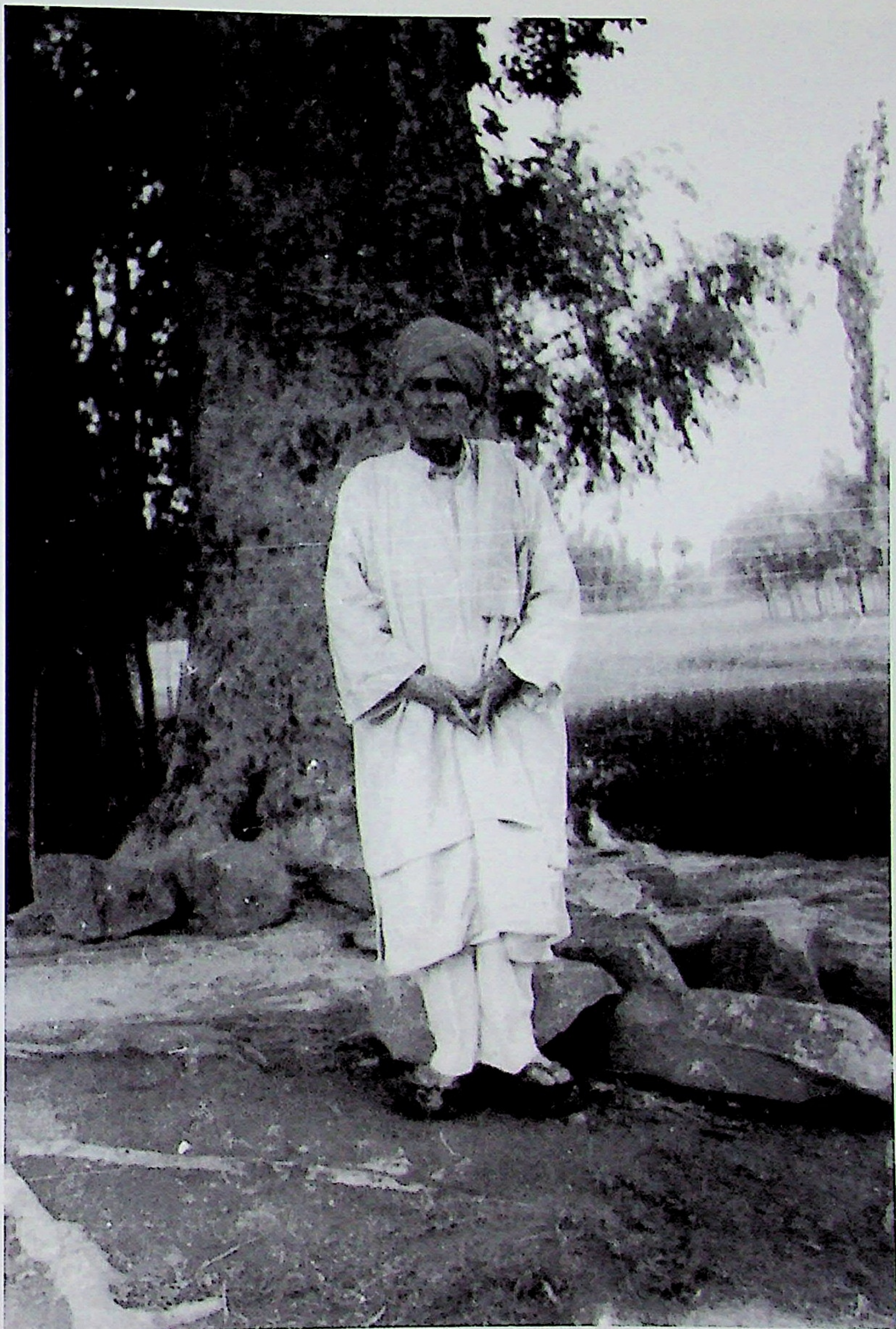
*Attending a political meeting.*



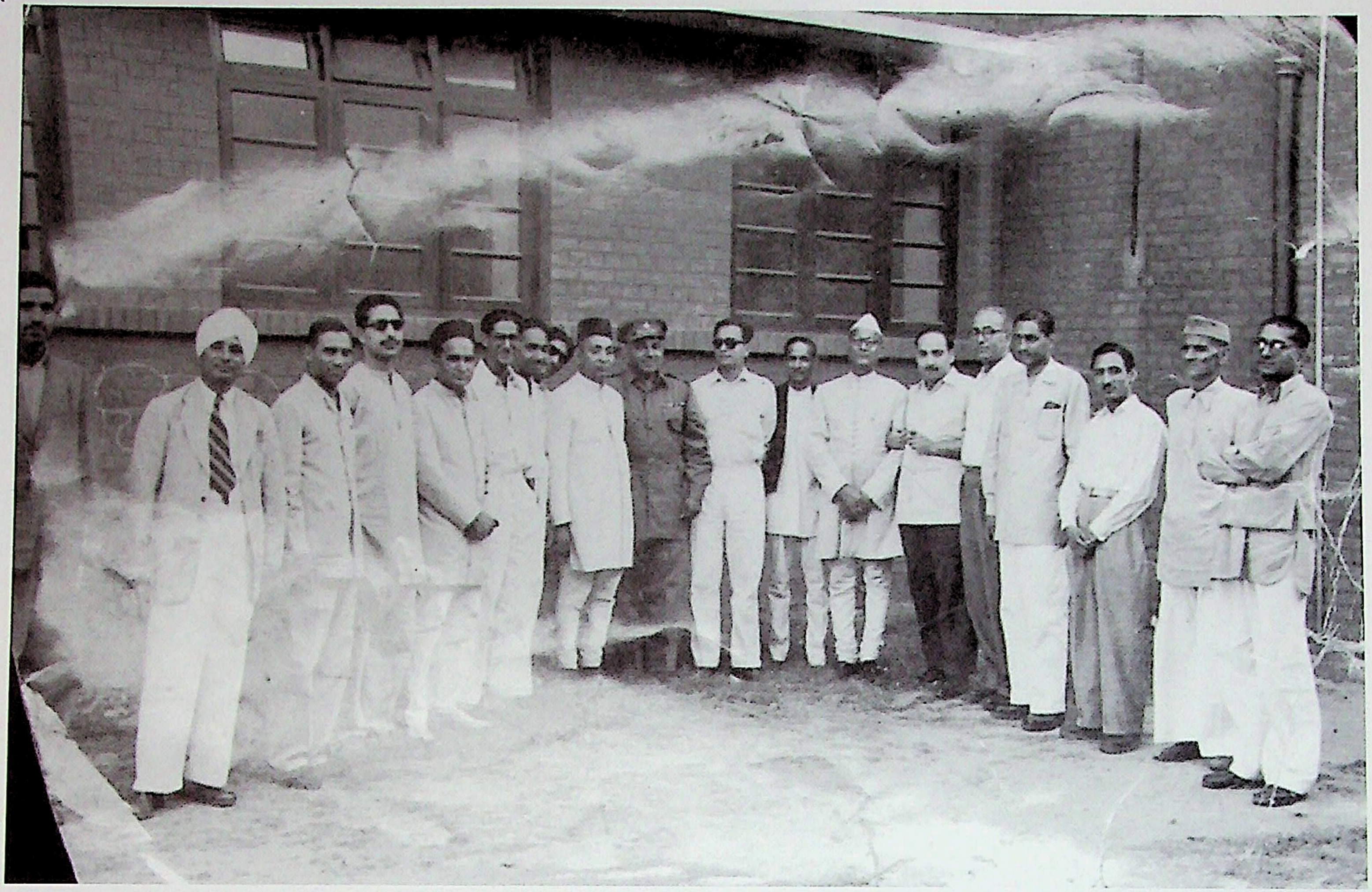
*Blanket around the body, legs partly bare wearing a **Khraw** with **Gassa Pushtt** in the feet.*



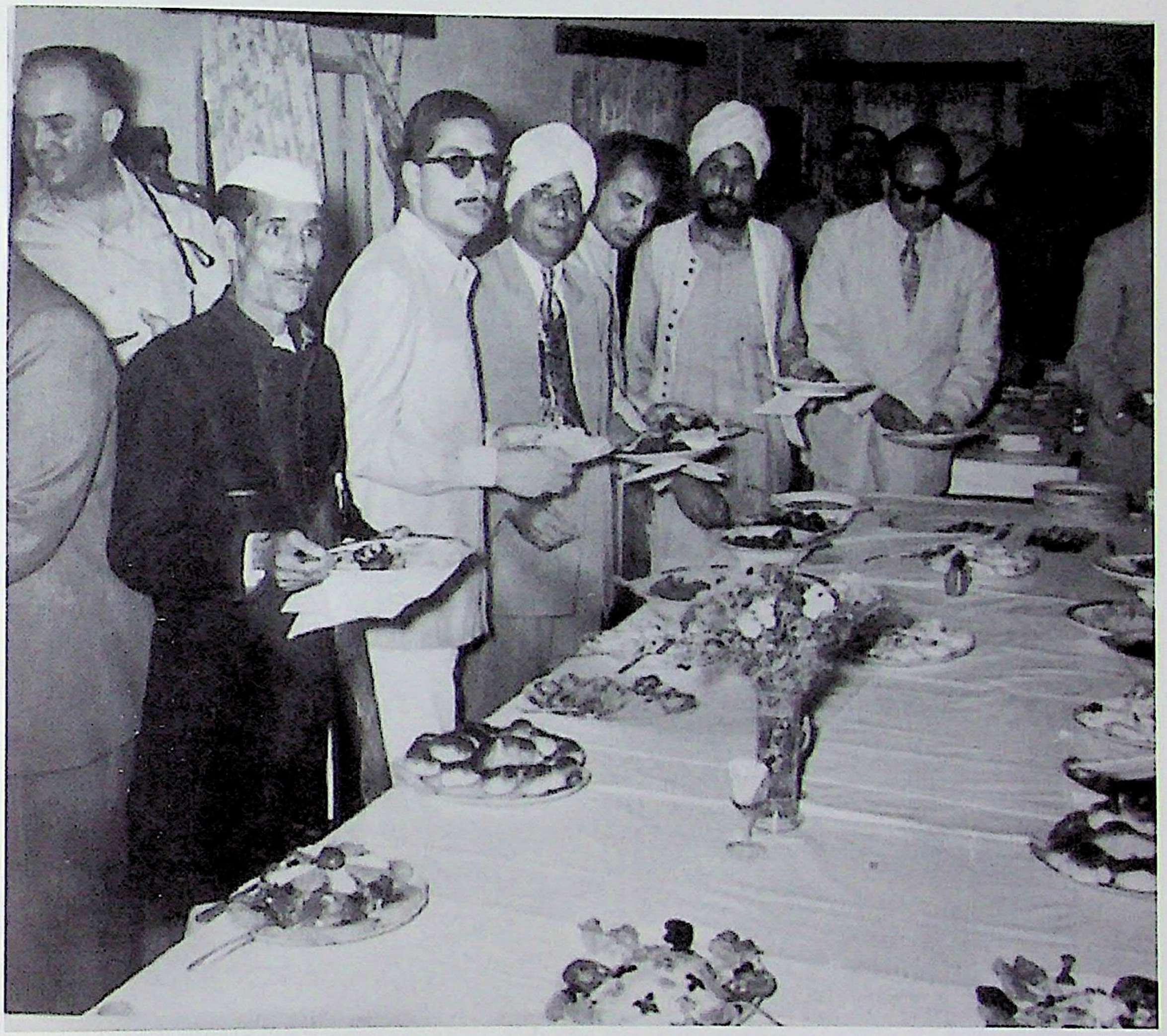
*With a child in the* ***Waer****.*



*Wearing a* ***Thaez Khraw*** *with an* ***Angocha*** *on shoulder in* ***Khulamore Pajama*** *and* ***Laadh-heth-Pheran****.*



*With other brother journalists during a conference–I*



*Enjoying a tea party at a conference of journalists–II.*



A child couple. (**Maharaz** and **Mahraen**)



*At **Sheetalnath**. Shoulder to shoulder with other relief workers during a crisis.–I*



*A meditating child with folded hands.*



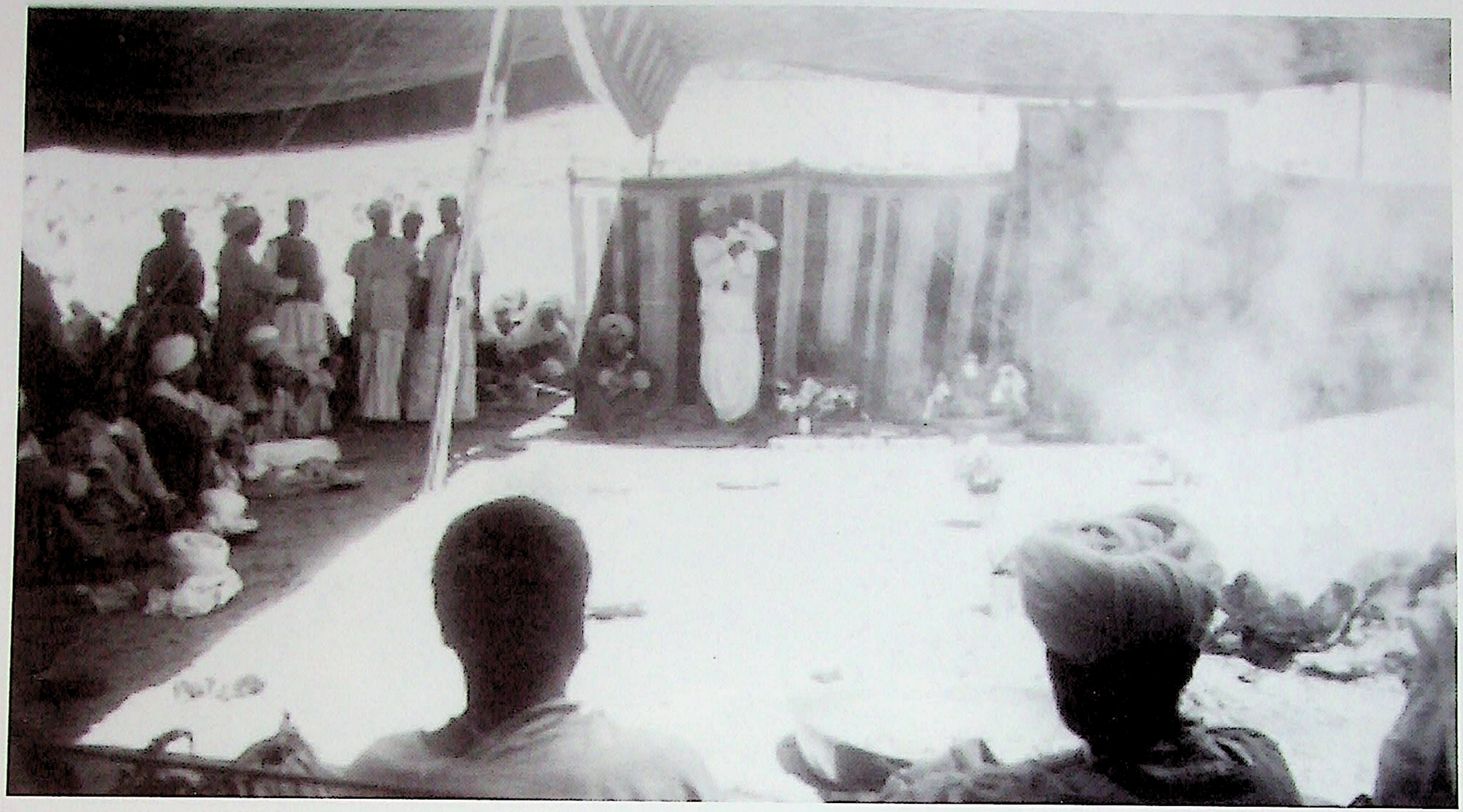
*Volunteers around a* ***Naveed Ambaar–I.***



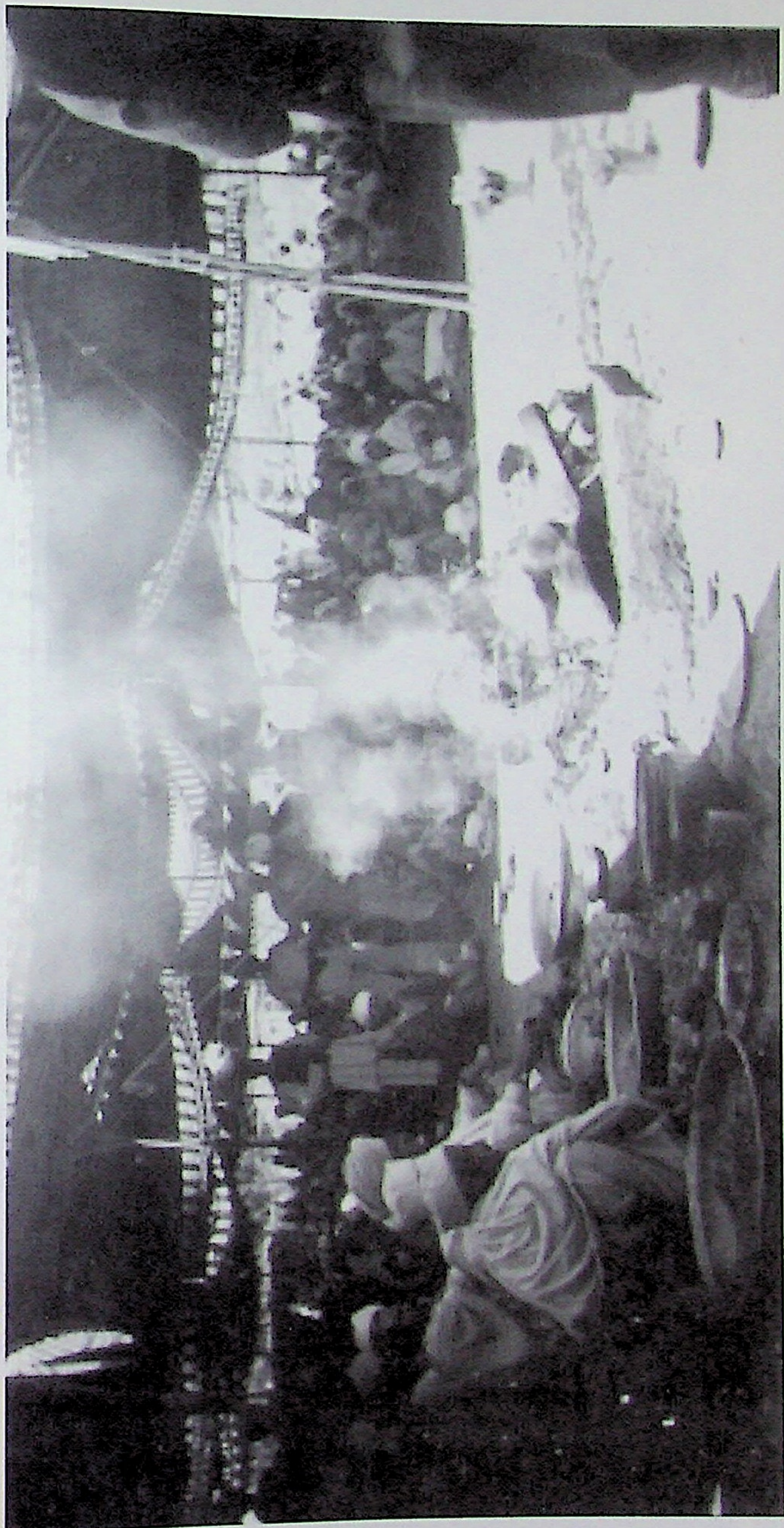
*Volunteers ready to distribute **Naveed** from the **Naveed Ambaar** spread on a cloth laid on the ground. A shovel to stir and manipulate the **Naveed Ambaar** can be seen. Also seen are rows of **Gaggaers** used to store ablution water during a **Mahayagna**–II.*



A spiritually elevated man making offerings to the sacred fire during a **Mahayagna**–III.



*Devotees at the break time during a **Mahayagna**. Bellowing smoke from the sacred **Havan Kund** can be seen–IV.*



A ***Mahayagna*** *in progress–V.*



Relief workers busy supervising transportation of relief materials–1.



*Volunteers of Relief Distribution Committee–1.*



*Volunteers of Relief Distribution Committee–II.*



*Relief workers busy supervising transportation of relief materials–II.*



*During a pilgrimage to the holy cave of* ***Amarnath–I.***



At the **Sheesh Naag** (*lake*) on way to holy **Amarnath Cave–II.**



A man sitting beside the window of his newly built modern bungalow.



*A man in the comfort of his home. A **Dewargheer** on **Takhuch** can be seen in the background.*



*A group of relief workers with their leader at* ***Sheetalnath*** *–II.*



*Children and family elders with the* ***Mekhla Maharazas****.*



*A devoted son at the bedside of his critically ill mother.*



*A man and a child seated on a **Braandh**. Closed **Wout Daer** and an open **Wuz Darwaz** are seen.*



*People peeping out from the **Daer** of their **Kuth** to witness a **Janma Ashtami** procession passing through their locality–I.*



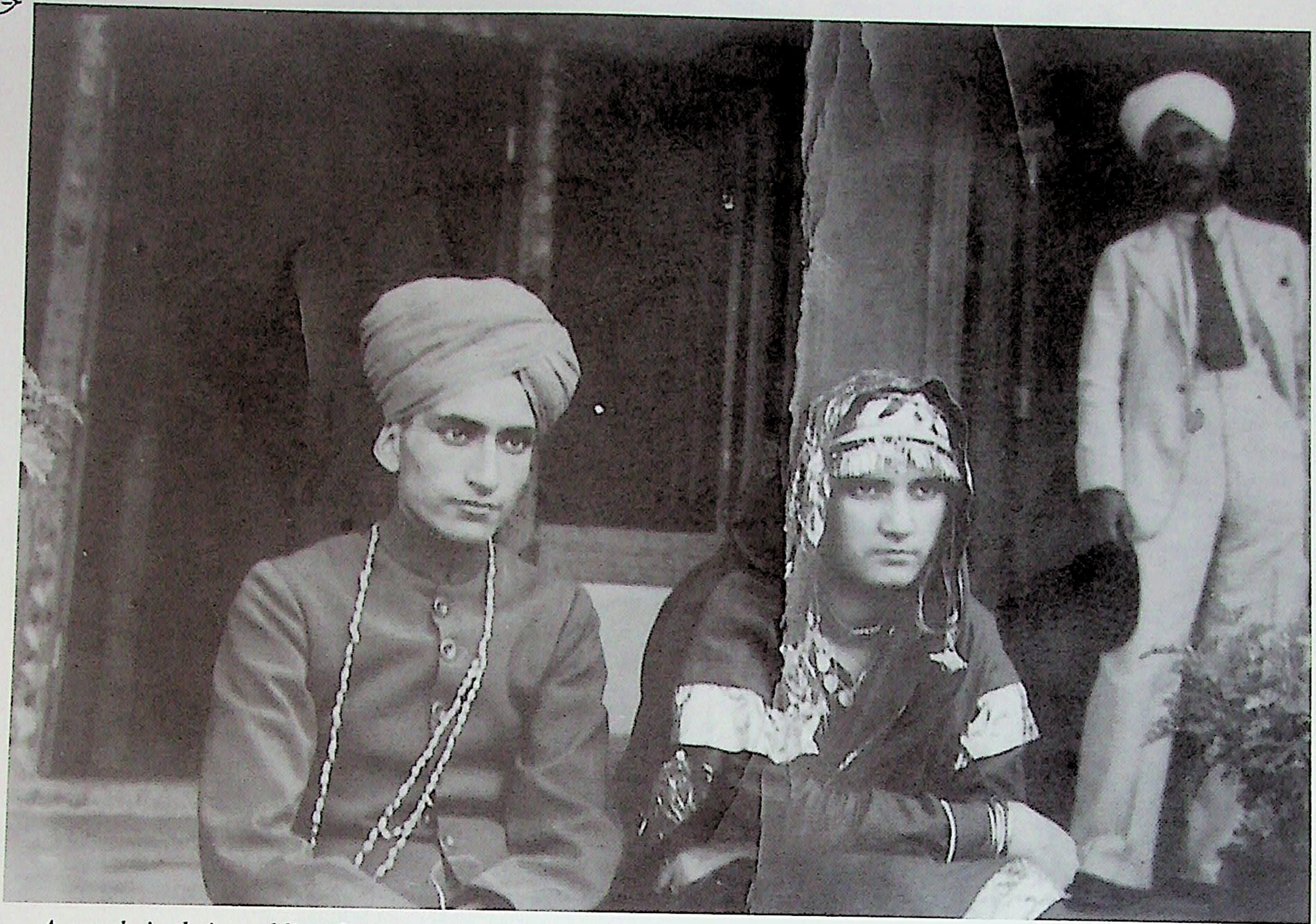
*At a religious procession on a **Janama Ashtami** day–II.*



A view of a ***Janama Ashtami*** *procession–III.*



*Group of men with their popular social leader during a* ***Janama Ashtami*** *procession–IV.*



*A couple in their wedding dresses on the day of their marriage. The* ***Maharaza*** *is wearing a* ***Aelae Maal****. A man, in suit and tie, standing behind can be seen.*



*A group of variously dressed men and children with a **Maharaza** during a marriage ceremony.*



***A Mahraen** garlanding a **Maharaza**.*



*Finest hockey players of the community with some of the best from the world of Indian hockey after a match during a hockey tournament–I.*



*Finest hockey players of the community with some of the best from the world of Indian hockey after a match during a hockey tournament–II.*



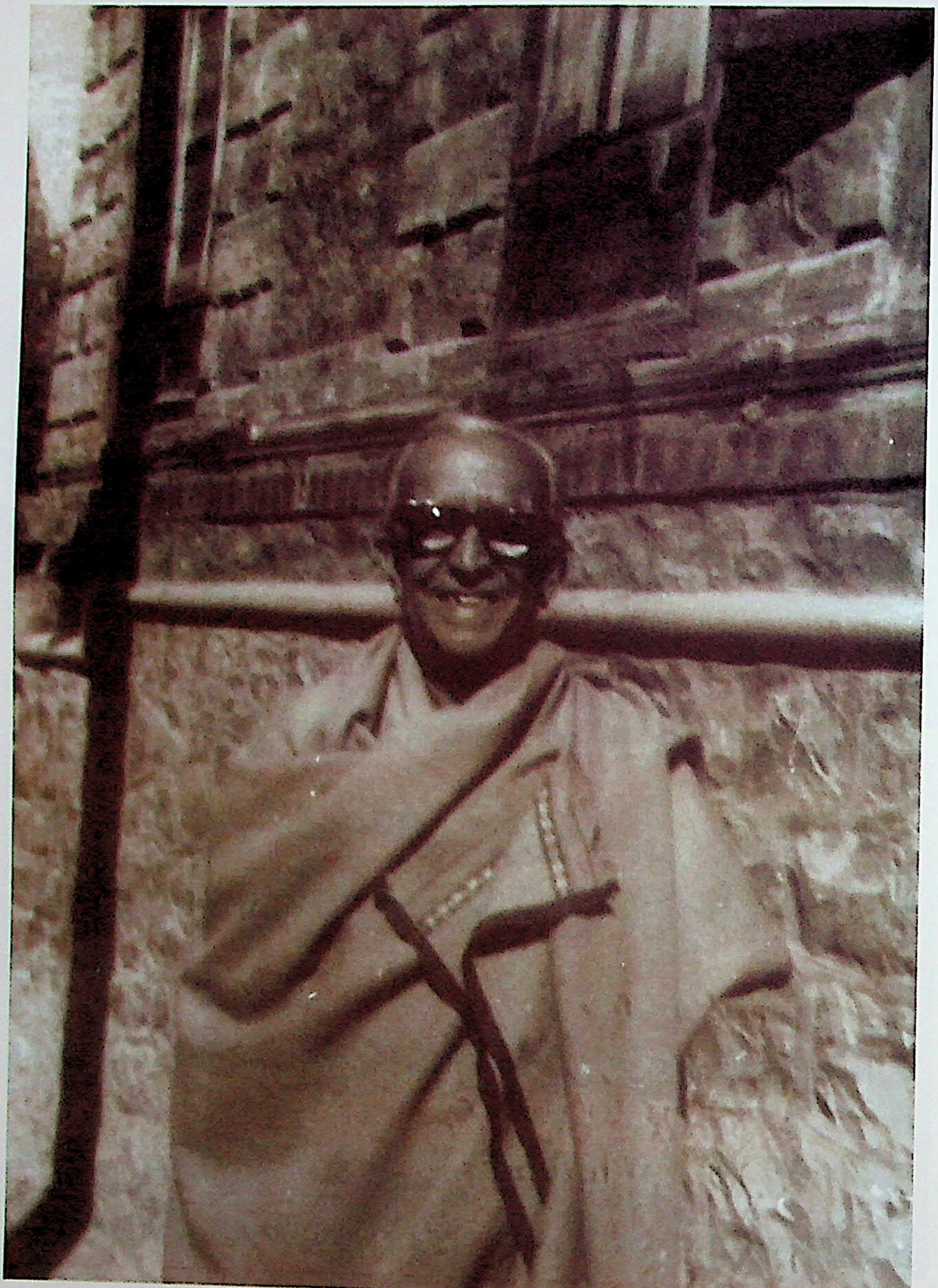
*Men with their young children during an outing to **Badaam Waer, Hari Parbat.***



*A group of men.*



*Wearing ties and English suits but with **Saafas** on their heads.*



*In a **Dussa** wrapped around the body. Cosy warmth reflecting in the smile.*



*With a **Mekhla Maharaza** holding a **Dandere Thaal**.*



*A group showing some moulders of the minds and young men in the making.*



A *Mekhla* ceremony in progress.



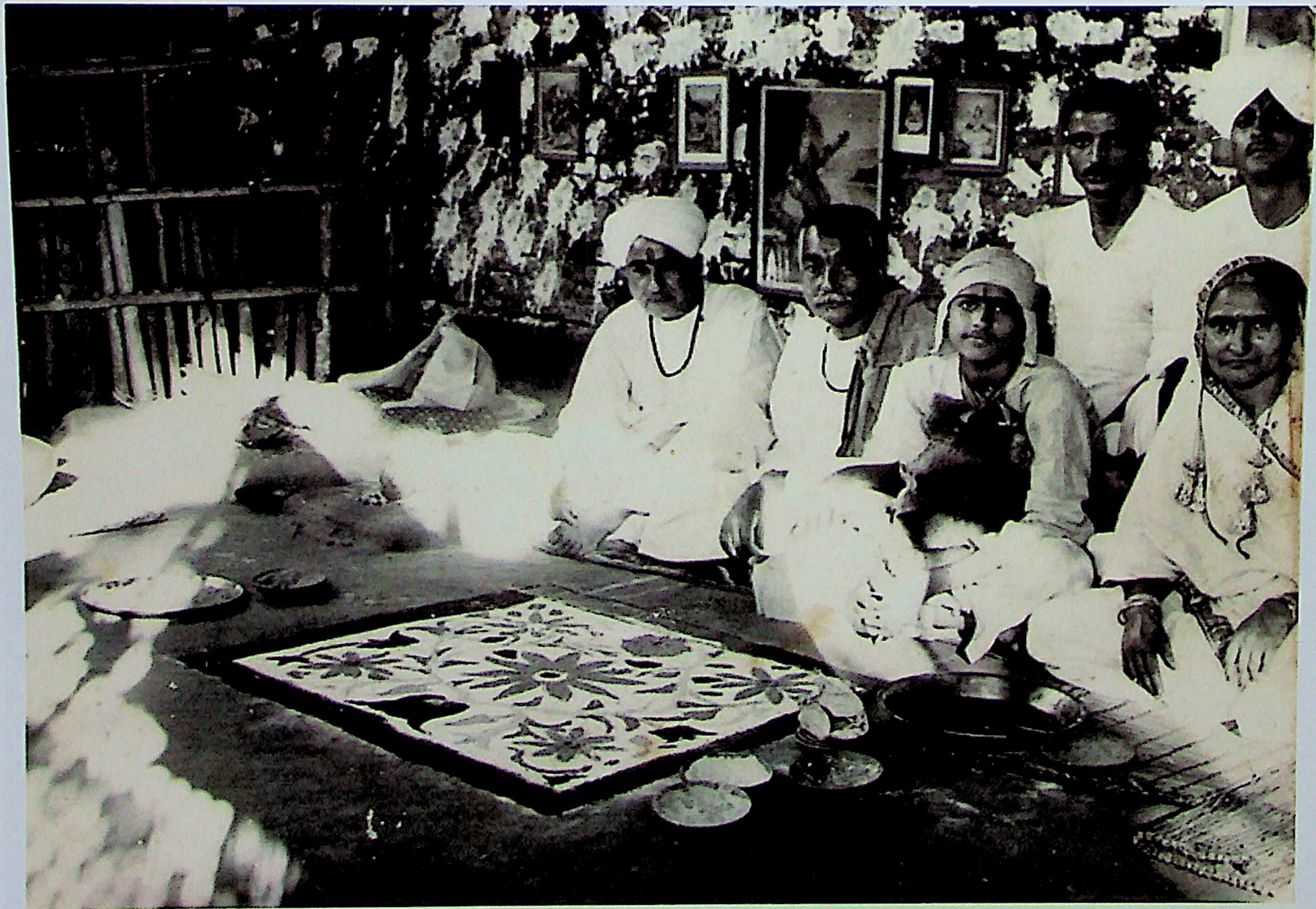
*The old and the young with a bridegroom in **Dastar**. (seated centre)*



*A young **Mekhla Maharaza** with family **Guru Ji** at break time during a **Mekhla** ceremony.*



*A man with his grandchildren.*



A ***Mekhla*** *ceremony in progress.* ***Mekhla Maharaza*** *with* ***Saeh Musala*** *as part of his ceremonial costume.*



*Performing* ***Parthishura Pooza****. Elaborate* ***Pooza Samgri*** *can be seen.*



*Family elders at a marriage function. A toddler-bride can be seen in the lap of her mother.*



*A group of zealous and dedicated social workers with their leader.*



*Distinctly dressed men, women, boys and girls of all ages with the* ***Mekhla Maharazas****.*



*A child in **Pheran** and **Kantop** with a group of men in outdoor dresses. No head is without a headgear (**Saafa** or cap).*



A waiting **Maharaza** with the elders of his family, one of whom has a child in his lap.



As incarnations of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati, a **Maharaza** and a **Mahraen** under a veil with a heap of flower petals on their heads during a **Poashai Pooza** ceremony.



***Mekhla Maharazas** and other close relations of the family during a **Mekhla** ceremony.*



*Relief volunteers at **Sheetalnath** in the thick of a historical moment.*



*A first generation woman Graduate with a young girl (passing on the baton).*



*A young woman in typical attire and traditional ornaments.*



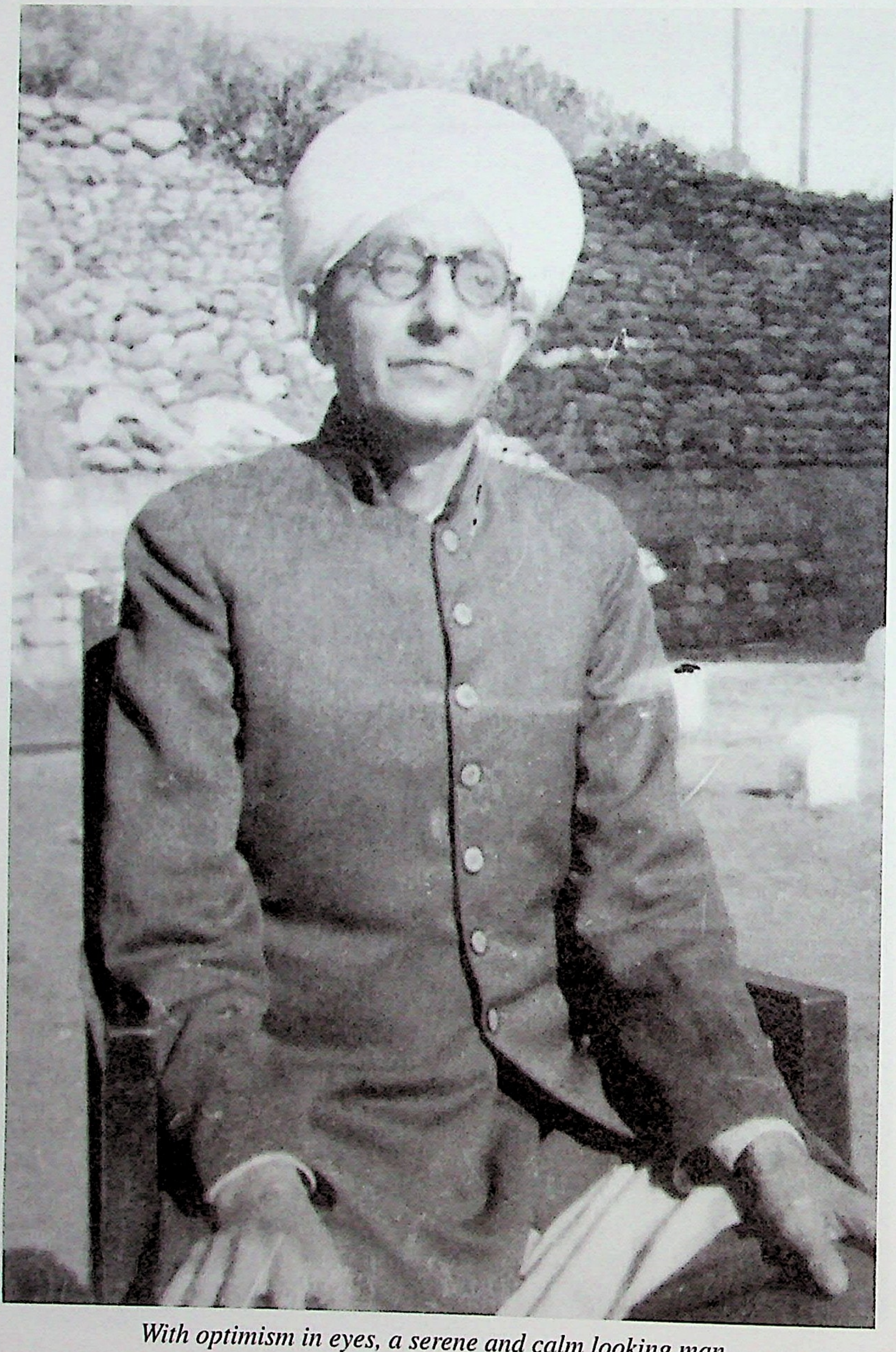
*A proud **Ustanji (Mashterbhaai)** with her **Korri Chaath**.*




*A formal farewell group of a school. Young girl-students at the threshold to enter college.*



*Devoted pupils with their revered teachers.*



*With optimism in eyes, a serene and calm looking man.*



*With her daughter in the lap, a woman wearing a saree and a long blouse the sleeves of which are rolled up. The **Lathur** of the woman with **Waenkh** is visible while the **Atth** with **Athor** is tossed behind the shoulder.*



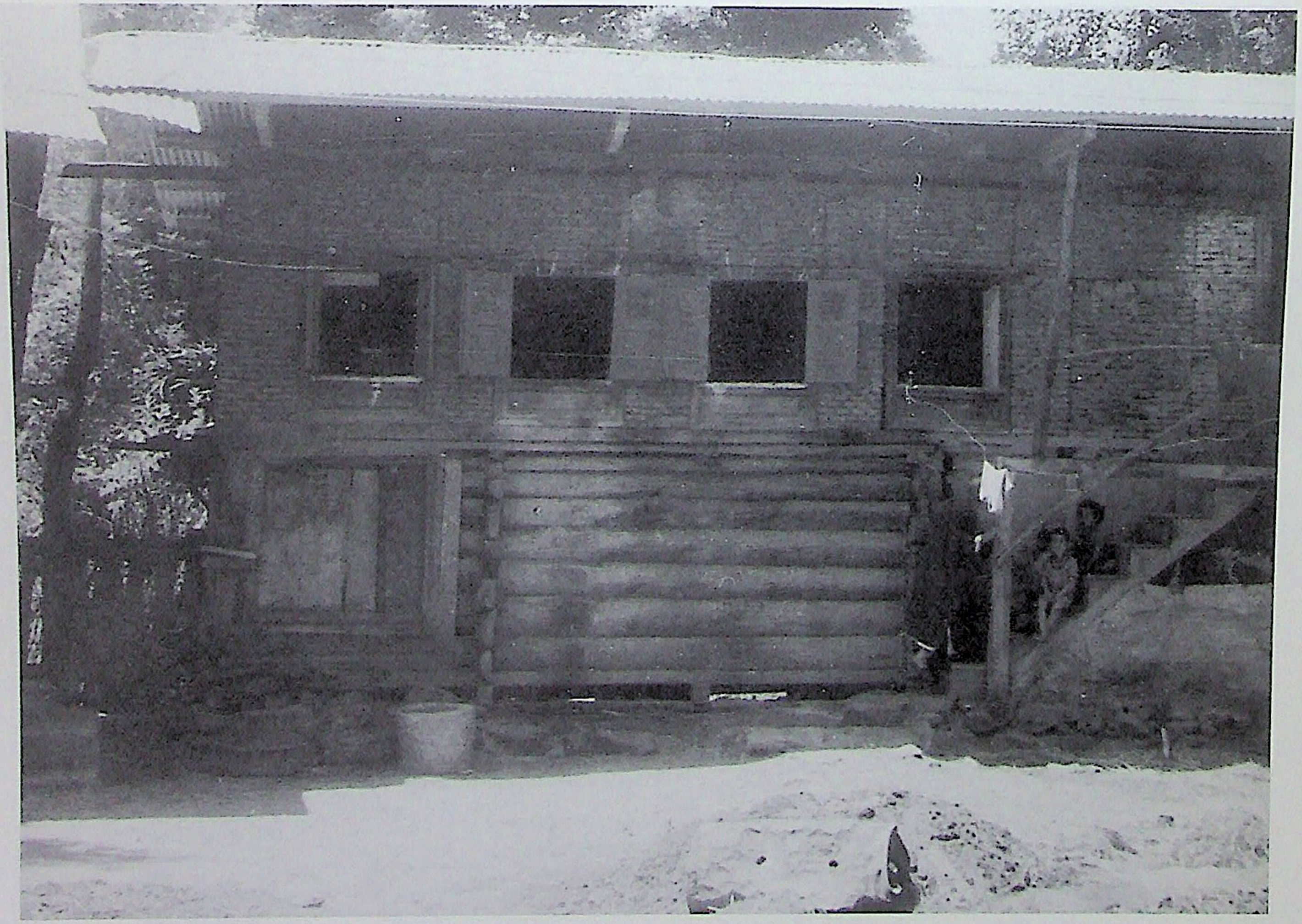
***Daanae Wavaan***—*Sowing of paddy saplings in progress.*



*Young trekkers on a pilgrimage to **Harmukh** peaks.*



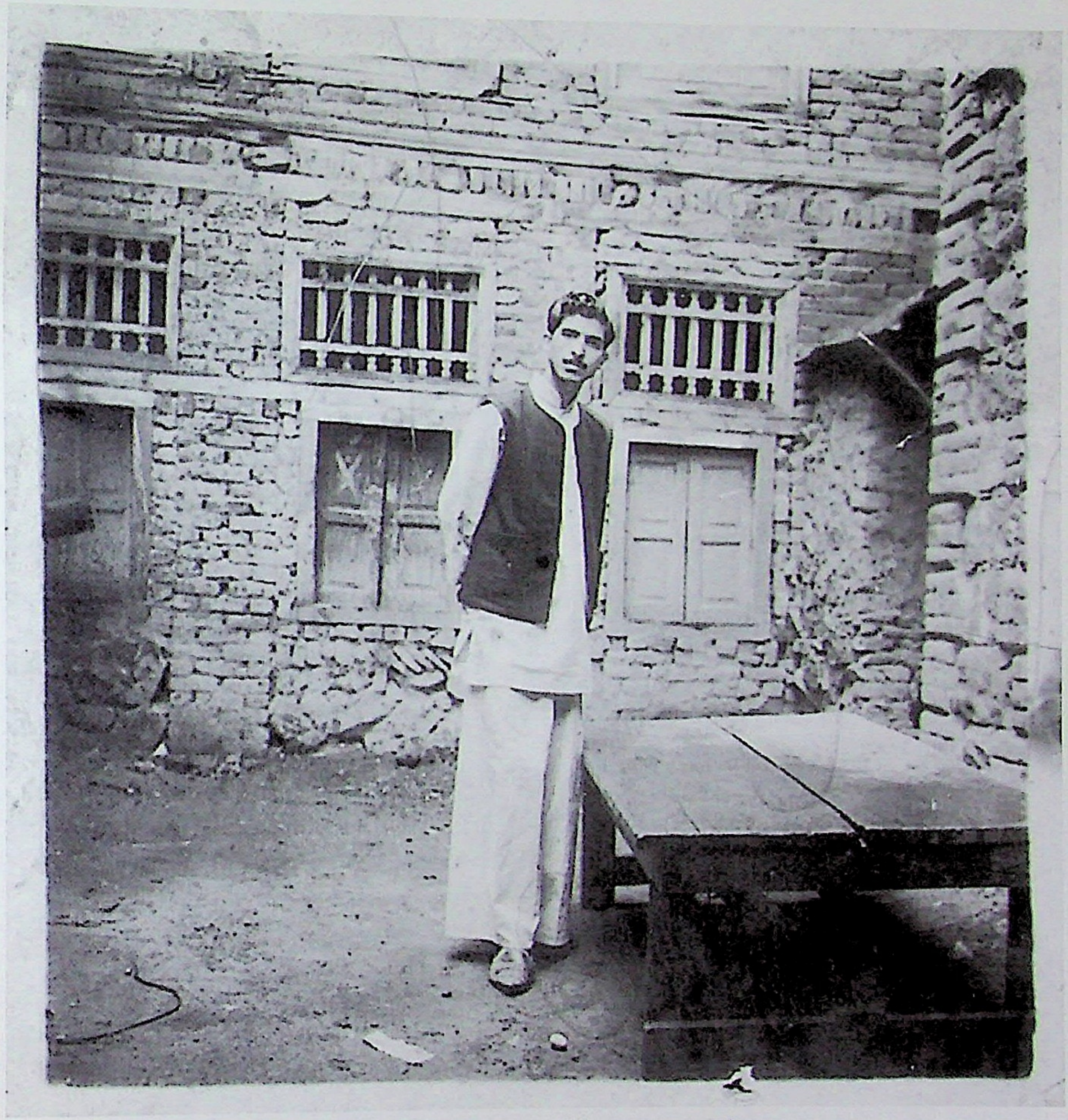
*Religious in mind, adventurous in spirit. Young men at the sacred **Ganggabal** Lake.*



*Children on the wooden steps of a stair.* ***Daan-Kutth*** *(in the ground floor of the house) and a* ***Kanz*** *(in the* ***Aangun****) can be seen.*



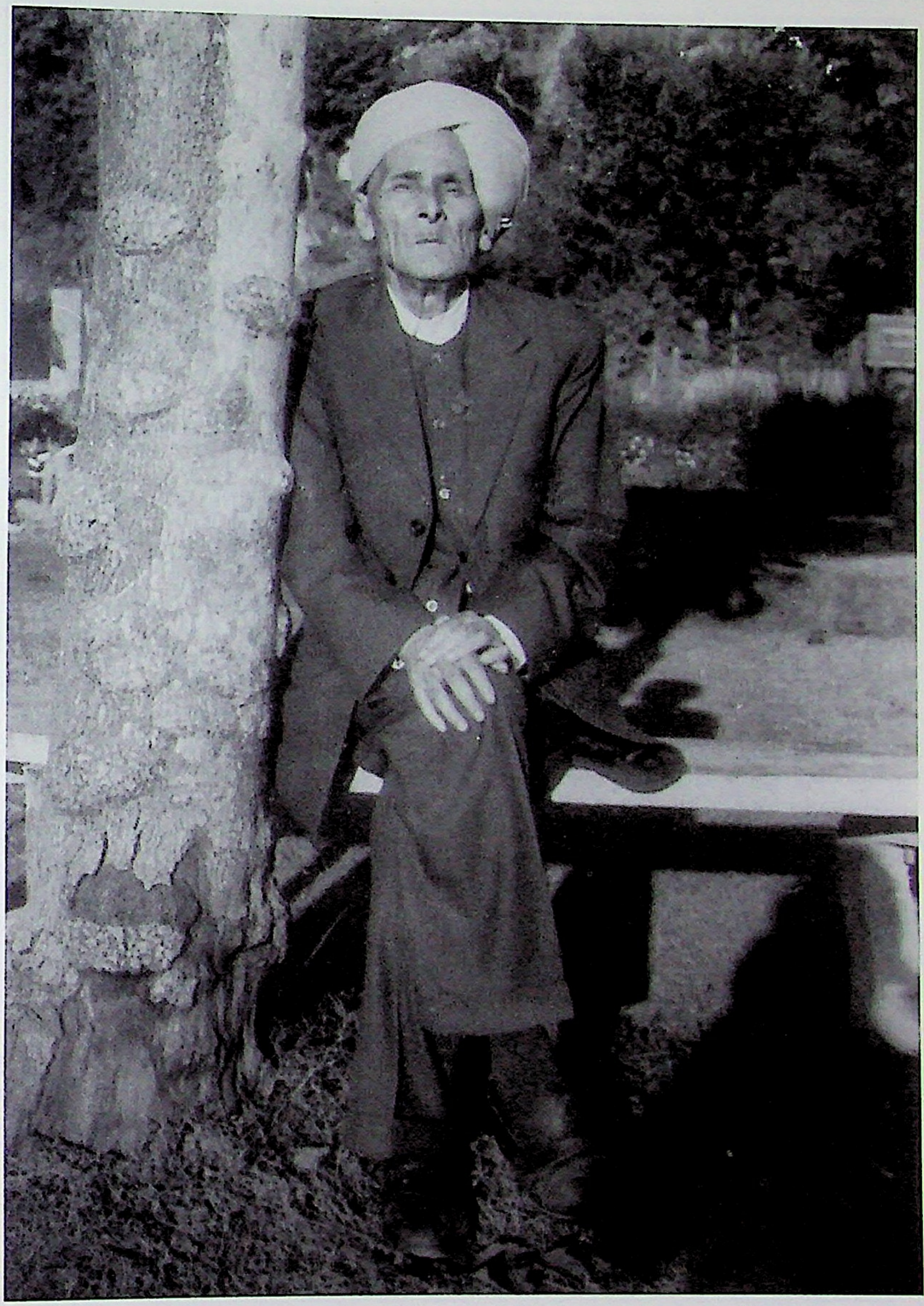
***Daanae Lonaan***. *Men harvesting their crop.*



*Standing in the **Aangun** of his ancestral house.*



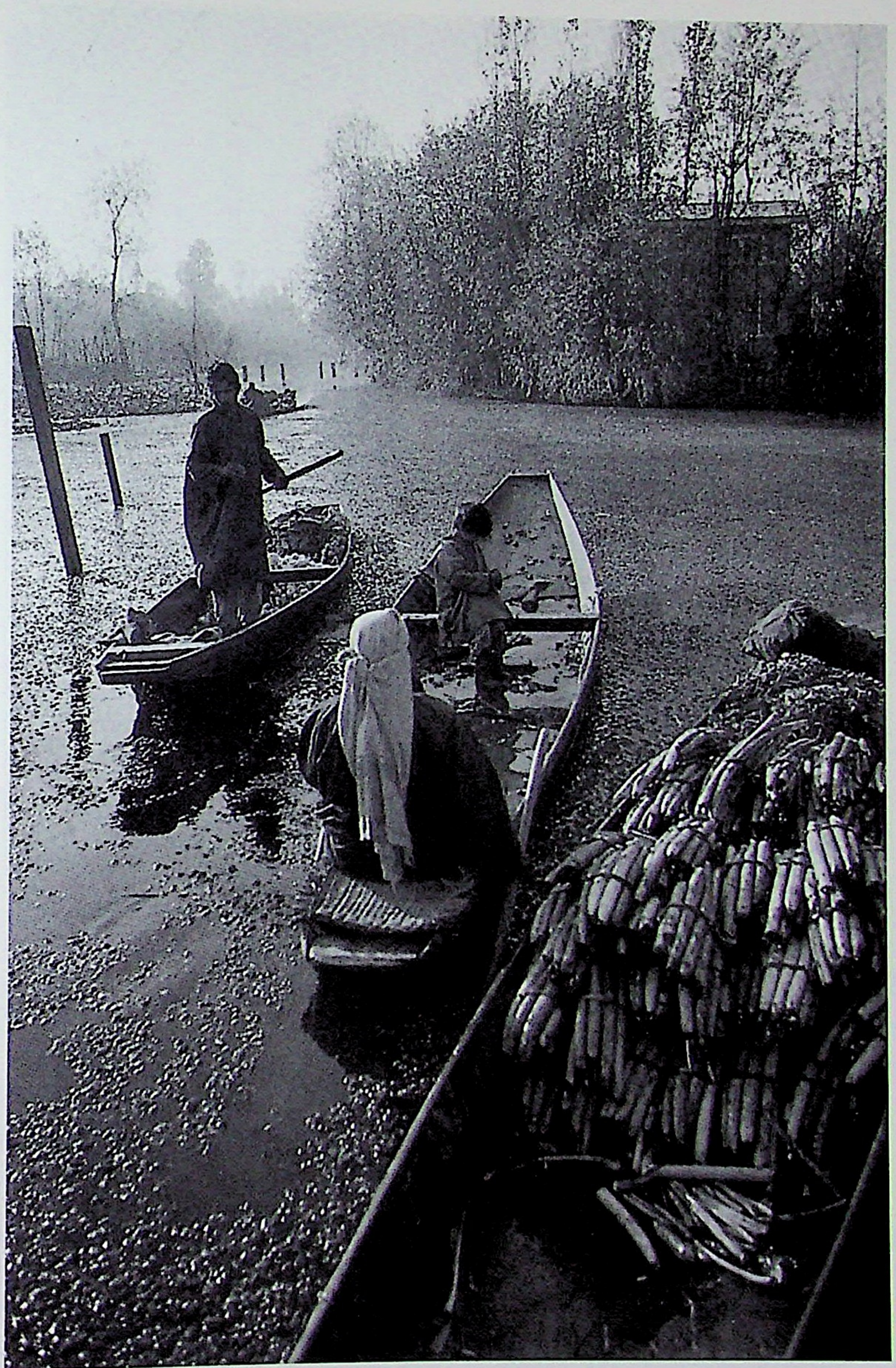
*A man sipping tea in a* ***Khos*** *held with a* ***Towlia*** *in hand while the other one is enjoying* ***Jajeer*** *– overlooking their* ***Khah****.*



*Wearing a **Dastar**, in a thoughtful mood leaning against a resilient tree.*



*Seated against the **Daeri–Damdaer**. Fathoming the storm gathering at the horizon of Time? Looking beyond the past? Lost in thoughts about the future?*



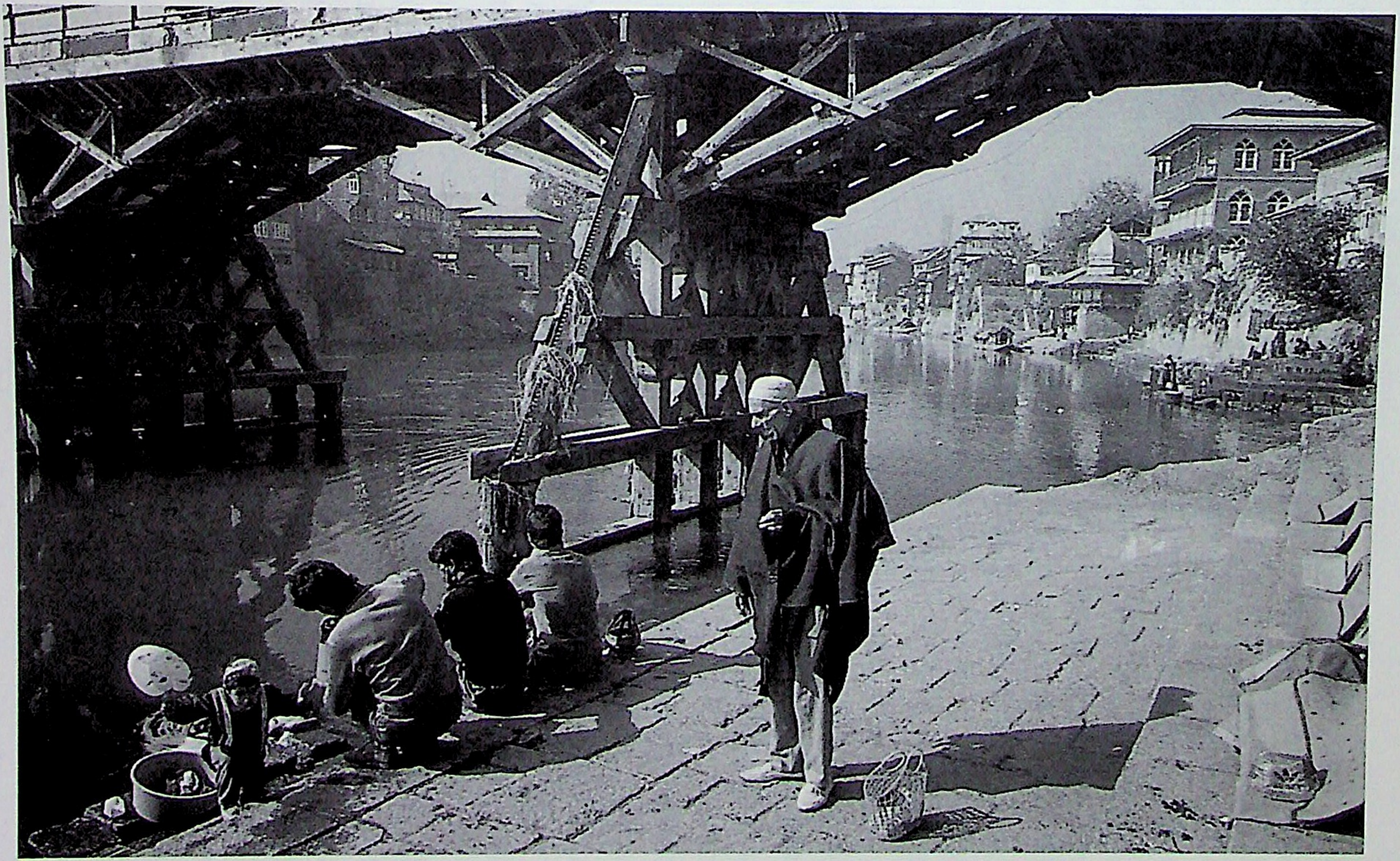
15* *A forlorn site.*



15*

*Fleeting sweet memories of peace and calm? Going away or coming towards......?*

**Times change. Traditions remain .........**



15*

...... and quiet flows the ***Vitasta***—calming the aching hearts and cleansing the sinful minds?

# GLOSSARY OF KASHMIRI WORDS

***Aangun:*** An open courtyard of a house, usually in the front.

***Achkan:*** A kind of a formal long coat with a neck-tight collar worn usually by rich, respected and elderly men.

***Aelae Maal:*** A necklace of cardamoms.

***Agnavattar:*** Ritual condiments offered to sacred fire during a religious ceremony.

***Amarnath Cave:*** Abode of Lord Shiva in North Kashmir. A famous pilgrim centre of Hindus.

***Ambaar:*** A heap.

***Angocha:*** A multipurpose small towel which is more than a handkerchief but less than a regular towel.

***Athor:*** Glittering trimmings attached to a *Dejhor* by a knot in the *Atth*.

***Atth:*** A long chain usually made of gold (but sometimes a cotton string) that dangles from ear-holes of a married woman to hold *Dejhor* and *Athor*- the symbols indicating her married status.

***Badaam Waer:*** A garden of almond blossom.

***Bekhya:*** Sacred alms.

***Bhajans:*** Religious hymns sung in praise of Gods.

***Botth:*** A bank of a river or stream.

***Braandh Pow:*** A step of the raised portion of a landing at the main entrance of a house.

***Braandh:*** The front raised portion with steps that lead to the main entrance of a house.

***Chai:*** A general term for tea sipped by Kashmiris, be it of the types *Mughal*, *Sheer*, *Dodah*, *Noon* or *Photae*. *Mughal Chai* is also called as *Kahwa* which again can be of various types like *Badama Kahwa*, *Shangri Kahwa*, *Aelae Kahwa* and likes depending upon the concomitants that are added while preparing this tea.

***Chikapot:*** A kind of window- blinds .

***Daan:*** A permanent hearth (type of a stove in the kitchen of a house-hold) made of bricks fixed in clay mortar in which wood is burnt as fuel.

***Daan-Kutth:*** A storeroom used for storing of harvested crop of paddy.

***Dannae Lonaan:*** Harvesting of the paddy crop.

***Dannae Wavaan:*** Sowing of paddy saplings.

***Daej:*** A square scarf of white starched cloth worn over the complete assembly of a *Tarangh*.

***Daer:*** A window.

***Daeri Damdaer:*** A bottom edge or a railing of a window.

***Damdaer:*** A raised edge or a railing.

***Darwaza:*** A door.

***Dauss:*** A compound wall usually made of stones.

***Deecha:*** A kind of a large thick-walled vessel used as a utensil (made of brass) with a big round bottom and a narrow neck.

***Dejhor:*** A small oval shaped pair of golden ornaments with pointed ends, suspended in an *Atth* dangling from ears, worn by married women.

***Devgoan:*** An important formal pre-marriage religious ceremony to sanctify the bride or the groom with angelic qualities and imparting righteousness. It is performed to propitiate the Gods attributed as the Sun, Moon and the Jupiter for seeking their blessings. After the *Devgoan* ceremony is performed, neither the bride nor the groom can walkout of the commitment of marriage. Devgoan formalises matrimonial ties in Kashmiri Pandits. Marriage must follow.

***Dewargheer:*** A kind of a kerosene oil lantern.

***Dub:*** A small wooden balcony of a house especially at the top floor.

***Dul:*** A large circular brass vessel with high walls and a big wide mouth as in the case of a bowl.

***Dussa:*** A type of a special blanket made from fine woollen yarn (of *Raffal* or *Pashmina* ) wrapped around the body, usually by men.

***Dwaar Pooza:*** A prayer offered at the entrance door to the wedding couple at the start of marriage ceremony at bride's house.

***Gabba:*** A kind of a spread cloth made of a woolen blanket used for sitting over it and decorated with multi-coloured motifs in woolen thread.

***Ganga Vyas:*** A young unmarried female who accompanies the bride to her new home after marrige.

***Ganggabal:*** A sacred lake in Kashmir famous for Hindu pilgrimage.

***Gassa Pushtt:*** A plaited dry reed strap used in *Pulhor* or *Khraw*.

***Gaggaer:*** A kind of a brass pitcher.

***Guru ji:*** A religious teacher and one who conducts various religious ceremonies.

***Hari Parbat:*** The abode of Goddess Sharika and a famous fort in Srinagar city.

***Harmukh:*** Sacred peaks in North Kashmir famous for the abode of Lord Shiva.

***Havan Kund:*** Enclosure of the sacred fire.

***Houz:*** A square or a rectangular area like a tank with moderately raised edges or walls but not covered at the top used either as a bathing corner or for washing and cleaning the house-hold utensils etc.

***Hush:*** A mother- in-law.

***Isband:*** A special kind of incense seeds (akin to sesame or wild rue) burnt in a *Kangri* fire at the time of religious ceremonies like *Yagenopavit* and marriage etc

in the belief of magical or mysterious means to access what is inaccessible. Usually a hoped for Divine blessings.

***Jajeer:*** A typical Kashmiri hubble-bubble (Hokhaa).

***Janma Ashtami:*** A day of religious function commemorating the birth day of Lord Krishna.

***Kalpush:*** A skull-cap or a head gear with usually a red circular band sewed to it made from woollen cloth embroidered with silver thread worn by Kashmiri Pandit women.

***Kangar:*** A kind of a portable fire-place, made of baked clay inner earthenware called *Kundal*, wherein the fire is placed and the outer encasement of wicker work ,sometimes very pretty, being ornamented with coloured rings to which a little wooden or silver spatula called *Tsalan* is tied to handle the embers. It keeps the Kashmiris warm in winter. *Kangris* of Sopore, Anantnag, Shahbad, Zainagir and Tsrar villages are famous for their quality and designs. Finely-worked and highly coloured *Kangar* used by wealthy people is called as *Khoja Kangar* while an ordinary peasent's *Kangar* crudely made is called as *Gristi Kangar*.

***Kani:*** Top floor of a house- a kind of a hall usually without any partition.

***Kantop:*** A balaclava.

***Kanwaej:*** An ear-ring usually made of gold.

***Kanz:*** A big stone mortar used for husking paddy and spices etc.

***Kathkar:*** A type of a low wooden fencing.

***Khah:*** A paddy field.

***Khos:*** A kind of a multi-purpose brass cup with a base (sometimes in the shape of a wine goblet, then termed as *Kenz Khos*) commonly used to drink tea.

***Korri Chaath:*** Girl students.

***Khraw:*** A wooden sandal generally with rubber straps.

***Khulamore-Pajama:*** A Payjama of wide bottom.

***Kutth:*** A room in a house.

***Kutumb:*** A large and extended family.

***Laadh-heth-Pheran:*** A *Pheran* with *Laadh*. (For more explanation, refer to *Laadh* and *Pheran* dealt separately in this list).

***Laadh:*** A loosely stitched fold at the lower end of a *Pheran* in the anterior and posterior portions used to extend its length when required.

***Lathur:*** Plaited tresses.

***Looeng:*** A typical long cloth, sometimes with coloured motifs tied by a knot around the waist over a *Pheran* by Kashmiri Pandit women.

***Maanziraat:*** A formal and auspicious night during which all the near and dear ones including friends and relatives apply Heena paste on their hands during a marriage or *Yagenopavit* ceremony.

***Maharaza:*** A bridegroom.
***Mahatma:*** A spiritually elevated soul.
***Mahayagna:*** A grand and elaborate ceremony of religious offerings made to sacred fire invoking the blessings of the Gods of Hindu pantheon.
***Mahraen:*** A bride.
***Mama Ji:*** Maternal uncle.
***Mantra:*** Holy chantings.
***Maer:*** A natural water body (usually a pond or a canal) which receives other waste water but no solid waste.
***Maess:*** Sister of mother (Aunt).
***Mattarmaal:*** A necklace made of a number of round golden beads held together by a string.
***Mekha Paizar:*** A pointed leather shoe without laces-a kind of pump-shoe with large round-headed nails fixed to its sole.
***Mekhla:*** A very important and sacred religious ceremony performed by Kashmiri Pandits to initiate formally their young or grown-up sons into education as well as to manly duties of a house-holder.
***Naag:*** A holy spring.
***Narivaar:*** The anterior portion of the sleeves of a female *Pheran* (generally 10 to 12 inches in width and about 6 inches long) usually made of white cloth to which a strip of variously multi-coloured printed cloth is stitched. However it is not worn by widows.
***Narivan:*** A special kind of thick cords of cotton threads dyed, alternatively red and yellow, tied and hung from either ears by married women of the family including first cousins at the time of a *Mekhla* ceremony.
***Naveed:*** Edible partake given usually by the *Guru Ji*/priest following the conclusion of a religious ceremony.
***Navidd:*** A barber.
***Nosh:*** A daughter- in-law.
***Pachae Barran:*** A high fencing of wooden planks. (Usually around a courtyard).
***Pahraat:*** A large flat circular vessel with high edges similar to a sauce pan but without a handle.
***Paannyaar:*** A spirit of community brotherhood.
***Panjaer Daer:*** A wooden window with completely carved floral or geometric patterns to allow light and air even when closed. A typical architectural feature of a Kashmiri house.
***Parivar:*** A family.
***Parthishura:*** Small Shiv Lingas made usually of clay procured from Shankracharya hill.

***Pattoes:*** A white cloth sheet of about 3 to 4 feet width and generally about 20 feet long spread for taking meals (usually a feast) while squatted on the ground.

***Phakka:*** A fast kept in observing a religious ceremony.

***Pheran:*** The most important part of a typical Kashmiri dress which is a long and loose garment, usually woolen, worn as a protection against cold. Its sleeves are either loose and wide or long and tight. When typically collared, the slit is not central but sideways and has collar laces which are called as *Taene*. The inner wear exactly like the *Pheran* made of cotton is called *Posch*. Thick woollen *Pheran* used in winter is called as *Loach*.

***Poashi Pooza:*** A part of religious function performed during marriage ceremony to the accompaniment of *Mantras* (sacred hymns) while the bride and bridegroom sitting under a temporary canopy like veil (usually a *Raffal* shawl) are showered with flowers by their immediate and other close relatives. Here the bride and the bridegroom are considered as an incarnation of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati respectively.

***Pooch:*** A snake- hood shaped skull cap, that is drawn into two long parts plaited to make a long tail portion, worn on *Kalpush* as a part of *Tarangh*.

***Pooza:*** Worship.

***Potmaharaaza:*** A young boy or a close male relative of similar age, dressed just like a bridegroom ,accompanying him on the day of the wedding ceremony.

***Pouff:*** An aunt. (Father's sister)

***Pulhor:*** A kind of a sandal without any heel made from plaited straw( dry grass blades ). Their very texture makes it a highly effective anti-skid footwear.

***Raech:*** An amulet or a thing worn as charm against evil.

***Rais:*** A rich or a wealthy person.

***Rajkiya Pathashala:*** A State owned Government school.

***Saafa or Dastar:*** A turban or a male headgear.

***Saeh Musla:*** A lion's hide with fur.

***Samgri:*** Different materials used in worship and ablutions which include wheat grain, barley, unrefined sugar, jaggery, almonds and currants etc.

***Sheen Jung:*** A playful fight of throwing snow balls at each other during a snow fall.

***Shraan:*** Taking of a bath.

***Sheetalnath:*** A popular locality in Srinagar city where Kashmiri Pandits would usually meet for important community gatherings.

***Sheesh Naag:*** A sacred lake enroute to Amarnath Cave.

***Tabchi:*** A round baked earthen plate with moderately angled edges.

***Taektaal:*** A type of a small square sheet of coloured or decorated paper pinned or sewed to the head- garment or scarf of married Kashmiri Pandit women during a religious ceremony like marriage or *Yagenopavit*.

***Takia:*** A big oblong or square shaped pillow used as a support for the back while sitting by leaning against a wall.

***Tarangh:*** A complete head-gear of a Kashmiri Pandit woman consisting of *Kalpush*, *Zooj*, *Pooch*, *Mohralaath*, *Shishalaath* and *Phael Sachaen*.

***Takhuch:*** A shelf within a wall.

***Teuk:*** A small round or longitudinal mark of vermilion or saffron that may sometimes be mixed with the ash from a sacred fire put centrally above the nose and between the eyebrows on the forehead during a religious ceremony or even as such by Kashmiri Pandits .

***Thaal:*** A large round shaped multi-purpose plate with raised edges usually used as an utensil for taking food.

***Thaez Khraw:*** A wooden sandal of some height ( usually 2-3 inches ) worn especially during winter to protect feet from slush, mud and snow.

***Thool Kalla:*** A tonsured head.

***Tok:*** A kind of baked circular clay plate with raised edges.

***Towlia:*** A towel.

***Tulla Mulla:*** A village about 20 Kilometers away from Srinagar, and famous for the abode of Goddess *Raginya Devi*.

***Ustanji or Mashterbhaai:*** A female teacher.

***Vemaan:*** Literary a plane, but here used to designate a decorated wooden plank to carry off a dead body of a very elderly person.

***Vitasta:*** The main river of the Kashmir Valley originating from Verinag spring. Also called as *Vyeth* or *Jehlum*.

***Vyug:*** A circular shaped decorated place nearly 4 to 5 feet in diameter marked on ground, in the front court-yard of a house, meant for the ceremonial reception and send-off to bride and bridegroom on the day of marriage ceremony. The ritual of standing on a *Vyug* is also integral to a *Mekhla Maharaaza* while on way to *Yaarbal* before concluding a *Yogenopavit* ceremony. The motifs of decoration are made by using lime powder, dyed dry clay or saw-dust in various hues like red, yellow, green and blue etc. These motifs can be drawn by anybody participating in the marriage ceremony but are usually drawn by young boys or girls.

***Waer:*** A kind of a kitchen garden in the rear or the sides of a house.

***Waguv:*** A kind of a mat woven from long dried blades of an aquatic weed, (a type of a grass called *Paech* in Kashmiri).

***Waenkh:*** (Braid) A woven band of thread (usually black in colour) as edging or trimmings plaited to the tresses. (Generally of a woman's hair).

***Wout Daer:*** A window of a ground floor room of a house.

***Wout:*** A large room at the ground-floor of a house.

***Wurusi:*** A kind of a wooden shutter with a number of horizontal planks used in place of a window pane.

***Wuz:*** Inner corridor of a house flanked on either side by rooms.

***Yaarbal:*** A landing site of a river bank, sometimes even referred to the river itself.

***Yagna:*** A ceremony of religious offerings made to a sacred fire invoking the blessings of the Gods of Hindu pantheon.

***Yazman:*** The eldest male host during a religious ceremony.

***Yazmanbhaai:*** The main female host (usually the eldest woman of the family) of a religious ceremony like marriage or *Yagenopavit*.

***Yonea:*** Sacred thread worn continuously by male Kashmiri Pandits after the performance of the *Mekhla* ceremony.

***Yonepan:*** A sacred thread of three (for a bachelor) or six strings (for a married man) worn by boys and married men at the time of *Yagenopavit* and marriage ceremony and thereafter.

***Zang:*** A kind of religious belief of touching a person on his right shoulder with a *Thaal* (plate) full of rice, a small amount of salt and some coins .

***Zangiya:*** A kind of blessing given at the time of a religious ceremony by holding a *Thaal* (plate) containing some uncooked rice, salt and some money, usually a coin, that touches the right shoulder of the person for whose sake the ceremony is performed.

***Zarbab Laet:*** A fine cloth with a long extension embroidered with needle-work done in silver thread .

***Zooj:*** A part of a woman's head gear (*Tarangh*) A scarf of moderate length made of fine thin net cloth.

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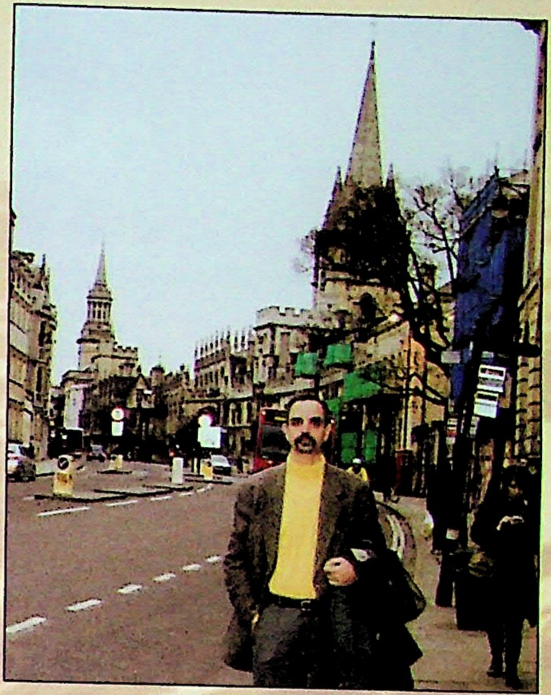
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*Sheesh Naag Lake, Kashmir.*
*Photograph by: RAMESH Manvati*





*S. N. Pandita, walking down a street in Oxford.*

Widely travelled between Europe and south-east Asia, S. N. Pandita is Researcher, HLF-KBC Sir Aurel Stein Heritage Project of the Kashmir Bhawan Centre, U. K. supported by Heritage Fund and the University of Oxford. He is a writer and researcher in the field of cultural studies and history of 20th century scholarship in Kashmir and has authored two books, a note to a monograph and forty five research papers, some of which form chapters of several other books in above noted areas. Besides, his papers have also been accepted for international publications. Co-directed and written scripts for three heritage documentary films, S. N. Pandita has also given lectures and talks both in India and abroad including those delivered at KBC, Luton and the Nehru Centre, London. He has attended many national seminars and international conferences which include those at the De Montford University and the SAALG conference of the British Library in England. He has visited many Hindu temples and monuments in Indonesia, including the world-famous ancient temple at Borobodur to learn and understand various aspects of their history, architecture and iconography. Recipient of International Shogden and Atisha awards, Pandita has also been honoured by the American Biographical Institute and International Biographical Centre for his contributions to cultural studies. He is member of several academic and cultural bodies which include the Kashmir Education, Culture & Science Society and N. S. Kashmir Research Institute, of which he is also the Secretary.

*Photograph by : Dr Satinder N. Ganju*

*"Unfortunately, memory can not be photographed"- Henri Cartier-Bresson.*



*The photographs presented in this volume reveal the peaceful face of the Kashmiri Pandits with unspoiled tradition. They carry something compelling in them and show the face and identity of the community much different than its present generation shows and carries. In a way, they are a reminder to the present day living generation of the Kashmiri Pandits as to how far they have drifted and changed in their social and cultural attributes. They also raise various other questions as to the need of preserving old attributes and desirability of change adopted willingly or forced by circumstances. Riveting pictures crystallize the past of the Pandits and give it meaning outside the cliché. In many photographs what is preserved in them no longer exists now. It only survives in this ark.*